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HON. MAYOR WOOD.

A MODEL MAYOR.

EARLY LIFE,

Congressional Career,

AND

TRIUMPHANT MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION

OF

HON. FERNANDO WOOD.

MAYOR OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK:

PRESENTING HIS PUBLIC SPEECHES AND MESSAGES, AND THE PRINCIPLES ON WHICH HIS GOVERNMENT IS FOUNDED.

BY A CITIZEN OF NEW YORK.

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THE CITY-HALL.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

In this age of moral obtuseness, political corruption, and servile, cringing timidity of officials before vice and crime, it is cheering to know that there is occasionally one who, independently and fearlessly, wields the sceptre of power which is placed in his hands, and, with full determination to conquer, grapples with every form of iniquity, making law, order and virtue triumphant. It is especially gratifying, in a great city like this, where lawlessness, immorality, bloodshed and murder have been almost unimpeded, to see a magistrate rise above the selfish desire to aggrandize himself, and scorn to pander to the corrupt desires of his constituents. The manner in which the lowest dregs of society in New York, composed in part of the scum of Europe's prisons and almshouses, have outraged all decency and good order, not only in the foulest dens of infamy and amid the darkness of midnight, but in our fashionable streets and in open daylight, calls for an outburst of indignation from every moral and religious man. It calls for more ; it demands ACTION—at the polls, by petition, and especially by sustaining those in authority who dare to face the terrific storm which threatens to overwhelm them at every step they take in wrenching the dagger from the hand of the assassin, in rescuing female virtue from the grasp of the debauchee, and in endeavoring to disperse the dark and threatening clouds of moral contamination which almost entirely hide from our view the light of morality and religion. The loose man-

ner in which the laws have been administered in this city for several years past is notorious; aye, the utter want of principle in many of our highest officers and their contemptible endeavors to aggrandize and enrich themselves at the expense of good citizens, have made us a reproach not only to this whole nation, but to European cities. It is a humbling fact that the tea-room and whisky-bottle have influenced many of our highest officers, far more than a desire to fearlessly and faithfully perform their duty, and endeavor to be in reality as they should be, a terror to evil doers.

Some of our chief magistrates have commendably endeavored to reform and renovate the city, and have succeeded to some extent for a short time; but have seemed finally to be overwhelmed by the immense tide of opposition and corruption with which they were surrounded, and to have given up in despair. We are fully aware that a man must have almost superhuman inflexibility, fearlessness, and perseverance, to stem the tide; but it CAN BE DONE. True it may be at the risk of slander and even LIFE; but IT CAN BE DONE. The laws are good, and only need a few modifications. Let them BE EXECUTED. No matter what the consequences are. Let opposers resist; let the envious growl and defame; let the dens of licentiousness gnash their teeth; let the assassin prowl along our pathway, endeavoring to silence us in death; and let the wail of revenge against us ascend from the cells of our penitentiaries and prisons; but let us do our duty in the fear of God, and all will be well. He whose eye cannot look upon iniquity with allowance, will bless us as magistrates, as individuals, and as a city.

We are happy to say that the subject of the following sketch has commenced his administration with a full determination, at all hazards, to carry out the principles stated above; and thus far he has been wonderfully successful—so much so, that his fearlessness and uncompromising determination to put down every obstruction to good order and morality, has called forth a universal outburst of approbation from the press; and even those who were once his enemies have become his friends, and heartily co-operate with him.

The following pages contain a brief sketch of the life of Hon. Fernando Wood, and especially a view of his public character and administration in this city.

As he has been known to express his unwillingness to contribute anything with a view of heralding his own fame, we wish it understood that he is in no way responsible for the publication of this volume. We therefore present a briefer sketch of our worthy Mayor than we hoped to do---the materials for which we have gathered from the New York Quarterly, public documents, and other reliable sources.

We present these facts not from any desire to flatter the subject of the sketch, who, like all other mortals, has his failings, but to hold up his administration of public justice as highly worthy to be imitated by those who occupy stations of public trust, and to call forth the sympathy and co-operation of all orderly citizens---and especially of the moral and religious in this community.

New York, May, 1855.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF MAYOR WOOD.

The subject of this sketch was born in Philadelphia, Pa., June 14th, 1812, where he resided six years, when his father removed to New York city. The father of Mr. Wood was a very worthy man, and had an extensive influence among the mercantile community, of which he was a member. He was educated under the superintendence of James Shea, late instructor of grammar in Columbia College, and afterwards received such training as admirably fitted him for mercantile pursuits. At a suitable age he engaged in business, in which he was abundantly successful, as he retired with a competence for life, after having labored as a merchant only about sixteen years. This remarkable success is to be attributed to his systematic business habits, unconquerable energy, and indomitable perseverance in all commercial arrangements.

In 1840, Mr. Wood was elected a member of Congress, which office he honorably filled during one term of three sessions. His able speeches in the House of Representatives are presented below. In 1850 he was nominated for Mayor of New York, but was defeated by A. C. Kingsland. In 1854 he was nominated again, and elected in November, to fill the chair he now occupies. He was, however, strenuously opposed by interested and prejudiced parties, and it was only by the number of candidates, dividing the opposers of Mayor Wood, that his election was secured. The friends of temperance, morality and religion, perhaps without foundation, entertained strong fears that he would not pursue such a course as they desired; but the reverse has proved true. He has far exceeded what they would have expected from the candidate of their own choice.

Mayor wood seems to be settled in his convictions of duty in reference to his present course of action. He has long been convinced of the defects in our municipal regulations, and of the notori-

ous laxness in the execution of the laws. We are informed that, some years since, when he was proposed as a candidate for the Presidency of the United States, he remarked that he had rather be Mayor of the city of New York. Mr. Wood is not an enthusiastic partizan, although he really belongs to a party. We believe that he is actuated, in his energetic administration, purely from a sense of duty and from a strong desire for a reform in our municipal government. His executive qualifications are of the highest order, and we are confident that he will continue to receive laurels of applause in the discharge of his onerous duties. He is determined to *execute the laws*, as we have intimated in our introductory remarks ; and even the Prohibitory Liquor Law will surely be put in force to the extent of his energy and power, as far as the decisions of his legal advisors will allow, though all the Rummies of New York should appear in battle array against him. A writer in the "New York Quarterly" has so clearly and forcibly presented the points in Mayor Wood's administration, that we cannot do better than to present the article nearly entire.*

A view of the manner in which Mayor Wood conducts the business of his office, as well as his habits of life, may not be uninteresting to the reader. A person unacquainted with the various transactions which come under his personal supervision and direction, has no idea of the amount of labor daily executed by him. We doubt whether any public functionary ever performed so much arduous work. Little if any of his time is devoted to his own private interests. He rises before daybreak, usually taking his morning meal by candle-light—after which he passes his time in his private office at his residence, answering communications, preparing letters, messages, &c., and marking out the duties to be performed by the attachés of his office. At 9 o'clock he proceeds to the City Hall, where he is engaged until $2\frac{1}{2}$ o'clock, in more multifarious and intricate duties than was ever performed by any Mayor during the same period.

* The New York Quarterly is an able Journal, published by James G. Reed, 348 Broadway (Appleton's Building), and edited by Mr. REMINGTON, a well-known writer.

Besides the municipal questions of great interest which are continually arising, the magisterial duties have greatly increased. Nor does the Mayor confine himself to these alone: he has made it his province to relieve parties who have been defrauded, where no criminal law could afford them aid, and where the slow process of civil remedy in the courts would consume a very long time. Many thousands of dollars have thus been restored to parties who otherwise could have obtained no redress.

To give some idea of the immense amount of business transacted by him, and the various labors connected therewith, we mention the following offices which are held by him, and whose meetings he regularly attends and takes part in their deliberations. He is President of the Board of Supervisors, President of the Sinking Fund Commissioners, President of the Police Commissioners, President of the Leake & Watts' Orphan Asylum, ex officio member of Commissioners of Emigration, President of the Board of Trustees of the Sailor's Snug Harbor, President of the Board of Health Commissioners, ex officio Director of the New York Juvenile Asylum, ex officio member of the Board of Trustees of the Astor Library, and ex officio Trustee of the Eastern Dispensary.

Much of Mayor Wood's time is occupied at his residence, in his private office. There his messages, letters, and various other official duties, are transacted; and it is really surprising how one man can, in so short a space of time, accomplish such almost Herculean tasks. The salary attached to the office is indeed trifling, very many of our judicial and executive officers receiving a much larger compensation. This, however, is not a matter of the slightest moment with Mayor Wood, his whole ambition being bent upon giving to the city of New York a better form of government, and upon setting an example to other cities in the Union, of what can be accomplished for the people, by energy, perseverance, and an honest discharge of public duty.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

OF.

HON. FERNANDO WOOD.

NEW YORK GOVERNED.

We cordially congratulate our fellow-citizens of the commercial metropolis upon the vast benefit which has come upon our city. It is proved by actual experiment that New York can be governed. The old axiom—Where there's a will there's a way—holds good as to the mayoralty ; and henceforth all men will bear it in mind that, when a mayor fails to meet the responsibilities of his station, it is only for want of will—not of power. The success of this experiment is full of more and wider hopes for our country than are obvious to superficial consideration. It is not easily realized, if at all, by even the most far-seeing, how much of the vital energy of our Republic is centred in New York. Its pulsations are like a great heart, and when healthy, it cleanses all, restores all, vitalizes all, and sends out streams of life to the remotest fibre of the body politic. There is not a city in the land which has not felt its police authority invigorated and its sense of security increased, by learning that New York is governed ; and New York itself feels as if a heavy and murky cloud, which overhung its prospects, and already began to paralyze its energies, had begun to be lifted up, on this practical solution of the momentous problem—which before had become so doubtful—whether it is possible to maintain a vigorous and thorough and impartial administration of the laws, as laws,

throughout the city. Millions of dollars of available capital, poured in upon us, could not have done so much for the enduring prosperity of the city, as has been done by the honored Chief Magistrate, by whose energy that fearful doubt is removed; and both the virtuous and the vicious have been made to know assuredly that government here is a stern and immovable reality. The friends of free government in all parts of the world, and its enemies too, may be taught by this example, once for all, that the capacity of man for self-government will stand the trial, even in the most heterogeneous population that ever was compacted together as a city in a civilized country. We desire to state this case fully and comprehensively, in the faint hope that the lessons which it teaches so forcibly will now at length be allowed to stand as settled principles, so that it shall never more be deemed fanatical or revolutionary to refer to these truths as axioms that need not be perpetually argued over again as often as they are referred to. The rebuke so quietly administered by a venerable judge, to a young lawyer who was haranguing at great length—"It is safe to take it for granted that the Court knows something of law"—ought to apply to politicians and legislators—at least in this country. Let the man be hooted down who assumes to teach politics, and yet does not know that the people can govern themselves.

The great want of New York has been a city government. *That* want is still unsupplied. We are governed, but it is by Mayor Wood, whose extraordinary wisdom and energy have enabled him to impart a working power to several different branches of the executive administration, by the simple force of his own will. The experiment is invaluable, as a ground of encouragement for future efforts—the resulting present benefits are beyond computation; but we are sure that all intelligent citizens will concur with us in the opinion that all these vast interests ought to have a better guarantee for the future than the capacity of a single citizen, who holds his office only for two year. And we feel, too, that it is the duty of the people, and of the Legislature, to relieve him from as many as possible of the obstacles and dead weights which he now has to contend with in carrying out his wise and faithful

purposes. Let us not only *be governed* by Mayor Wood, while he retains the will and power, but let us also have a *government* which we can rely upon, to carry out the people's will, and protect the people's interests, when Mayor Wood shall no longer occupy the Prætorian chair. But our first duty is to set forth, in a little more detail, what Mayor Wood has actually done for the city during the first quarter of his administration.

MR. WOOD'S ELECTION.

The city election, by which Mayor Wood was elevated to office, was conducted in a manner quite peculiar. The Reform Committee, a large body of our most respectable citizens, and elected without reference to party, for the very purpose of bringing forward more responsible and trustworthy men for our municipal offices, proposed to have the suffrages of all the friends of order united upon a nominee of their own—naming first Mr. Nicholas Dean, and on his declining, under the plea of age and inability to endure the burden, Mr. Wilson G. Hunt. The Democratic friends of the national administration nominated Mr. Fernando Wood, a candidate the most distasteful that could have been selected, in the view of multitudes of citizens. The Whig party deemed it more important to keep up their organization than to elect a Reform mayor, and nominated Mr. J. J. Herrick. At a late period, the new and secret association, called Know Nothings, nominated Mr. J. W. Barker, who also had the nomination of a portion of the Temperance people.

In the canvass, which was not active or enthusiastic, the friends of all the others professed to be particularly fearful of the success of Mr. Wood, and each party urged the claims of its candidate as the one who was the most likely of all others to defeat Wood. There is no doubt that hundreds of citizens voted as they did, for one of the other candidates—not from any preference for him, and perhaps against their own individual choice—under the belief that by voting for Hunt, or Herrick, or Barker, instead of their first preference, they should be more likely to keep the office from Wood. The result of this quadrangular struggle was an aggregate

of 49,643 votes, when the aggregate of votes for Governor amounted to 60,367 ; showing that no less than 10,724 citizens, about 18 per cent. of the whole, who actually went to the polls and voted, took no part in the election of Mayor of the city. Those who voted were : For Wood, 20,003 ; for Barker, 18,547 ; for Hunt, 15,397 ; and for Herrick, 5,696. Wood over Barker, 1,456. Majority against Wood, 29,640. Proportion of Wood's vote to the whole, 40 per cent. The Democratic votes for Governor in the city were 31,545 ; 26,780 for Seymour, and 4,765 for Bronson. Wood's fell short 11,542, or 38 per cent. The presidential vote in 1852 was 34,226 for Pierce, and 23,115 for Scott. Wood below Pierce, 14,223, or 41 per cent. The position of parties in the two Boards of the City Council are as follows :—

Aldermen, Democrats, 7 ; Whigs and Reform, 15—majority, 8. Common Council, Democrats, 26 ; Whigs and Reform, 34—majority against the Democrats, 8.

In the State Legislature, they stand : Senate, 23 Whigs to 10 Democrats ; Assembly, Democrats, 42 ; Whigs, etc., 85. Majority against Democrats, 43.

We have stated the case in all these various aspects, not for any partisan or other unworthy purpose, but because we judged it important to show, as fully as we could, the exact circumstances under which Mr. Wood undertook the office of the mayoralty, with all the odds that were against him. Let it be added, that his predecessors for several years have been gradually growing more and more disheartened with the difficulties they had to encounter, from the unskillful machinery of our city government, and the progress of political demoralization, until the last one had virtually given up in despair, and contented himself with the most perfunctory performance of the ordinary routine of duty, apparently without an effort to restore a healthy administration of affairs. Add to this, that the great body of those who most desired a reform of the city government expected nothing from him, had opposed him in the newspapers, and voted against him at the polls, and regarded his election as a great calamity, under which the only consolation was in the hope that now things would sooner come to the worst,

and thus at length be ready to mend. We cannot well conceive a more unpropitious introduction into a high and responsible office; nor one affording so little to encourage a single-handed attempt at a general reform. Such was the aspect of things on the morning of the new year.

INAUGURATION OF MAYOR WOOD.

At twelve o'clock, noon, the new mayor took the oath of office, and entered upon the discharge of the same, by communicating to the two Boards of the Common Council an inaugural address, the publication of which, in the papers of the following morning, fairly electrified the city, and diffused a thrill of congratulation throughout the whole community. It was so firm and authoritative in its tone, so clear and discriminating in its statements, so bold and uncompromising in its positions, that the very reading of it gave assurance of a new era in our municipal history. It was evidently the product of a mind which knew what to say, and which would not fail to do as it said.

FIRST MESSAGE OF MAYOR WOOD.

To the Honorable the Common Council of the City of New York:

GENTLEMEN: In assuming the duties of Chief Magistrate of this great city, I am conscious of its responsibilities and requirements. I shall endeavor to supply my want of experience and knowledge by an entire devotion to the public interests, and hope, by a faithful discharge of my official trusts, to meet the approbation and receive the support of your Honorable Body and my fellow-citizens.

The present is not an auspicious time to commence a new administration; it is beyond the ability of any man, exercising the duties of this office under the city charter, to give this people that government which appears to be so generally expected, and which is certainly so much required.

However we may differ as to the cause, there can be no doubt of a pervading dissatisfaction with the municipal affairs of this city; that this feeling exists, and that there are sufficient grounds for it, all must admit; whether it arises from defects in the fundamental laws, or from improper local legislation, or from mal-administration upon the part of

those intrusted with the executive duties, are questions upon which there is diversity of opinion; in my judgement all of these are the causes.

The amended charter of 1830 was preferable to the present system. Admitting that it required modification, the subsequent amendments have but increased the difficulties.

The allegation that it was inadequate to the increased size and wants of the city, was, in my opinion, entirely without foundation.

The Constitution of the United States is as applicable to the present greatness of the Republic as it was to the Federal Union at the time of its adoption. Had amendments been made to it at the instance of every party or statesman who deemed it insufficient, we should have fallen to the same condition as a nation that this city has as a corporation.

The mistake in disturbing the charter of 1830 was not only in the alterations effected, but also in the introduction of an uneasy spirit in the people, who, by the continual application to the state legislation, have been taught to look to foreign remedies for domestic abuses.

Thus have we transferred to Albany much that could have been better cared for among ourselves—forgetting the old republican maxim, that no power should be delegated which can be exercised by the people themselves. This principle should never be forgotten. It was faithfully adhered to by the framers of the national Constitution. In all countries and in all ages, the utmost caution has been observed in granting to representatives the right of even ordinary legislation.

We should not present the first instance in which a people voluntarily surrenders the power to form the organic laws, yielding that highest of all prerogatives to men who owe us no responsibility, are not chosen by our suffrages, who are foreign to our interests, do not understand our wants, and who, consequently, are liable to become the tools of designing men, having selfish or corrupt objects of their own to obtain.

Amendments to the charter of 1830 have, one after another, been adopted at Albany, until now we are administering the government by portions of six different charters, which create nine executive departments, having undefined, doubtful, and conflicting powers, with heads elected by the people, each assuming to be sovereign and independent of the others, of the Mayor, or of any other authority; and beyond the reach of any, except that of impeachment by the Common Council, which never has been, and probably never will be exercised.

This irresponsibility has been productive of carelessness in expenditure, and negligence in the execution of the ordinances.

Thus, in the attempts to remedy defects by foreign aid, which could have been accomplished at home, we have fastened upon ourselves a complicated, many-headed, ill-shaped, and uncontrollable monster, which has not, in my opinion, developed its worst characteristics.

So far as my duties are defined, I feel some embarrassment. Even co-ordinate powers with the several executive departments are denied me in some quarters; and the fact that my predecessors, under the new charters, have not attempted their exercise, is relied upon as sustaining this position.

Without desiring to question the wisdom of those who have preceded me in this office, I must be permitted to construe my powers and duties as I understand them. Restricted as the prerogatives of the Mayor have been, by almost every legislative act appertaining to the government of this city, for several years, still there is sufficient left to instill more energy into the administration than now exists, and to hold at least a supervisory check over the whole city government.

It is true, that though ostensibly head of the Police Department, he is not so practically, in the essential elements of authority—that of controlling the retention or removal of his own subordinates. The Chief of Police holds his place independent of the Mayor, that officer having been appointed during "good behaviour," by the late Mayor and Board of Commissioners, under the law of 1853, which they construed to give that authority. He cannot, *solus*, appoint or remove the humblest subordinate in the service, nor take the rules and regulations for its governance. Of these requisites of power, so necessary to make an efficient police corps, he is by law deprived. Discipline can only be obtained and maintained by the firm hand of unrestricted power; besides, it is wrong in principle, to make any public officer responsible for the acts of subordinates, who are placed beyond his individual power to remove.

These are some of the evils arising from the frequent application to state legislation for this city. Instead of a simple form of government, easily understood, the power of its officers so well defined that there could be no conflict or misunderstanding, we have one full of the objections referred to.

It is not my purpose, at this time, to indicate a substitute, though I cannot omit to add my belief, that the most perfect form of government was that adopted by the framers of the Federal Constitution. Its clear and simple provisions are equally applicable to municipal corporations, or to a nation of a hundred millions. The Mayor should be to the city what the President is to the general government. There should be cor-

responding executive departments, with heads selected by the Mayor, (subject to the confirmation of the Board of Aldermen) who should have entire control, and be, himself, responsible to the people. The Mayor and Heads of Departments should meet in council, and have a general uniformity of action and co-operation with each other, in carrying out the laws and preserving the general interests of the city. Over the whole should govern the Chief Magistrate; he should have the one-man power, which history teaches is the least dangerous, and the most positive for good.

Certainly we have suffered more from legislative assumptions, or misconduct of subordinates in authority, than from the tyranny or corruption of a chief ruler.

Precedent shows there is safety in the latter, not only in the exercise of authority for the public weal, but as a barrier against the wrong doings of the former. The stronger the head, the more healthy the body; but if strength is taken away by diverting it to a multitude of heads, the whole becomes enervated, and unable to discharge its functions.

Concentration, with ample power, insures efficiency, because it creates one high, responsible authority. Decentralization is subversive of all good executive government.

This want of concentration has been the prime cause of the immense load of taxation which we now bear. To compare the relative taxation per individual under the charter of 1830, and that now existing, will prove this assertion.

In 1843, the amount raised by tax for the support of the city government, was one million seven hundred and forty-seven thousand five hundred and sixteen dollars and fifty-nine cents; whereas, in 1853, it was five millions sixty-seven thousand two hundred and seventy-five dollars and sixty-nine cents; and this year it is nearly six millions—a startling increase. Need you be told that this addition of two hundred and fifty per centum is the result of either corruption or wasteful extravagance—the natural consequence of irresponsibility?

And here let me diverge, to remark that, to tolerate profligate outlays of the public money, whilst nearly one tenth of our whole population are in want of the necessaries of life, is as shocking to humanity as it is injustice to a large and valuable class of our suffering fellow-citizens.

Surely we are admonished that, if this rate of taxation be continued, more of it should be devoted to the relief of the poor, whose industry bears most of its burdens, and who are now ringing into our ears their cries of distress. Labor was never so depressed as now. Employment

is almost entirely cut off, and if procured, its remuneration is totally inadequate, owing to the high price of articles of subsistence. The prices of labor and of food bear no relative equality.

In ordinary times of general prosperity, capital possesses advantages over labor.

Capital can always protect itself, and it is only at periods of inflation, when capital is directed to speculation in the products of labor, that the operative is appreciated, and his industry rewarded by competent compensation.

But now, when capital either timidly retreats through fear to the bank-vaults, or is diverted to the oppression for gain of those who are employed, their condition is sad enough. Does it not behoove us, not only individually but in our corporated capacity, to throw ourselves boldly forward to his relief?

This is the time to remember the poor!

Do we not owe industry everything? It is its products that has built up this great city.

Do not let us be ungrateful as well as inhuman. Do not let it be said that labor, which produces everything, gets nothing, and dies of hunger in our midst, whilst capital, which produces nothing, gets everything and pampers luxury and plenty.

It is our duty to take and administer this government under the charters and laws as we find them, until a change is effected for the better. Valuable improvements can now be made, notwithstanding these objections to the system. All the evils of which the people complain are not chargeable to wrong legislation. If the Common Council will be more cautious in the passage of ordinances, especially those involving disbursements of money, holding fast to the purse-strings, as against the harpies, who for many years have hovered around its chambers—and if the executive bureau will co-operate with me in the rigid enforcement of the laws, and particularly in restraining expense and exacting a faithful performance of every contract—we may do much towards removing the present discontent.

Most assuredly the people pay enough for the better administration of their public affairs; and it has never appeared to me that they were unreasonable in their requirements.

They ask public order—the suppression of crime and vice—clean streets—the removal of nuisances and abolition of abuses—a restriction of taxation to the absolute wants of an economically administered gov-

ernment, and a prompt execution of the laws and ordinances. Let us endeavor to meet their expectations.

For myself, I desire to announce here, upon the threshold, that, as I understand and comprehend my duties and prerogatives, they leave me no alternative, without dishonor, but to assume a general control over the whole city government, so far as protecting its municipal interests may demand it. I shall not hesitate to exercise even doubtful powers, when the honor or the interest of the public is abused.

The public good will be sufficient warrant to insure my action. Under this law I shall proceed, not doubting your concurrence and the support of the people for whom the responsibility is assumed.

I have purposely omitted, in this communication, the usual recommendations and references to the affairs of the city. There are many prominent topics to which I will allude in another communication, to be made as soon as your body is organized and ready for business. I shall then make recommendations, which, if carried out, will reform many abuses, reduce the expenditure, and increase the revenue, without increased taxation. In the mean time, the usual annual reports will be made from the several departments, to which I ask your special attention.

With a hearty desire that, in our separate spheres, we may conduct the affairs of the city so as to merit a continuance of its greatness, and with confidence in the ability and devotion to the popular will which influences the several members of your honorable body, I commend its deliberations to the protection of that All-wise Providence, which will, no doubt, so conduct its councils as to insure the prosperity and well-being of the whole community. FERNANDO WOOD.

January 1st, 1855.

CHARGE TO THE POLICE.

On the same day, he issued a circular to the captains of police, in the style of a determined chief magistrate, who did not entertain the thought that his will could be disregarded or his commands disobeyed: "You will see that every requirement is complied with, and that the results be reported every day to the chief at his office, in your usual morning return. I will also take this occasion to ask of you the most rigid adherence to the rules and regulations governing the Department, and to express the hope that discipline

will be observed, without relaxation, in your district. Discipline can only be maintained by a regard to the smallest requirements; it requires compliance with *every order*, however trivial or apparently unimportant—it recognizes no right in a subordinate to judge the practicability or propriety of and direction issued by a superior officer." Such an order, by its very tone and force, at once infused life into that department, and brought the police into the feeling of responsibility, of serviceableness, of the possession of power, and of conscious self-respect. From the appearance of a set of lazy, listless, disorganized hangers-on, they put on the appearance of an organized and disciplined body of men, who felt that they were in the service of the public, and that under their protection the citizens were bound to rest in safety and peace.

With this order was issued a code of strict instructions to each member of the police, appealing to his ambition to retrieve the lost character of the police, by a course of conduct worthy of the position of trust and honor which he enjoyed. "You have now," said he, "a determined chief officer, who will not be indifferent to a single dereliction of duty upon the part of those *for whose conduct he is responsible* to the community." "I cannot look over the whole city to see that all is right; but you can for me. I rely upon you. You are to be the eyes through which the theatre of my duties is to be observed, and the messengers to convey to me, through your officers, faithful and truthful reports." These instructions related to the daily reports, which each man is to make when on duty, in regard to every breach of the city ordinances; every omission to report being punishable as an act of disobedience. Particularly they were to report every street uncleaned, every unlicensed house for the sale of liquors, every public-house open on the Sabbath, every house of prostitution or for gambling, every street not lighted, every street or side-walk encumbered, every excavation or nuisance, and every dereliction of duty by an officer of the city. They were to disperse all noisy gatherings on the Sabbath, to protect strangers and emigrants from extortion, to remove beggars from the streets, and see to the prompt removal of snow and ice; to arrest any who created riot, or were drunk or

disorderly in the street, any cart-man or coachman who obstructed the crossings, any servant throwing offal or ashes into the street, etc. The closing of the public-houses on the Sabbath required renewed and express orders, and was rendered more difficult by the persistence of the large hotels in keeping up their sales at the bar. Whereupon the Mayor addressed a courteous note to the keepers of hotels, asking their co-operation, as good citizens, in the reform he was endeavoring to carry out, and assuring them that he should make no distinctions, but meant to enforce the law to the utmost against every place where liquor was sold unlawfully on the Sabbath. He also put forth an order to the police to report every other place of business, particularly daguerreotype rooms and clothing stores open on Sunday, and declared his determination "to make this city as distinguished for the orderly and peaceful character of its streets on the Sabbath, as it has heretofore been on that day for everything that was objectionable and shocking to the moral sense of the people."

NO POLICEMAN ALLOWED TO ENTER A PUBLIC HOUSE, OR A HOUSE OF ILL FAME, UNLESS ON OFFICIAL BUSINESS.

An important step was taken towards the elevation of the police personally, by an order peremptorily forbidding them to enter a public-house or brothel, except when summoned, or for the prevention of crime. A host of abuses were suppressed, and temptations removed from the policemen, by another order, prohibiting all settlements by them with persons arrested, and requiring them in every case to appear and make oath to the charge on which the arrest is made.

ABUSES OF HACKMEN, COMPLAINT BOOK, &C.

By another order, he at once annihilated the intolerable hackmen's abuse, which has heretofore made all travelers dread the perils of an arrival in New York by steamboat. He also adopted a simple expedient, which it is strange no one had ever tried before, of opening a complaint-book in his office, to which every citizen might have access, and where he was at liberty to

enter his complaint against any officer or other person for a breach of the laws, or for any other grievance which the municipal authorities ought to remove. These complaints are not only open to public inspection, but are found to furnish an interesting paragraph of city items for the newspapers, besides obtaining the prompt attention of the Mayor. The number of drinking-houses open on Sunday was soon reduced from 2,300 to about 20, and the arrests for crimes and offenses on the Sabbath fell from 150 to 30. Although it was impossible to remove all abuses in an instant, more has already been done than any man but Mayor Wood would have believed possible, and we do not believe there ever was so great a change effected in the moral and social and material condition of half a million of people in six weeks, as he accomplished in the first half of the first quarter of his first year's mayoralty. And the cordial approval he has received from all quarters, ought to assure him that he is ingratiating himself with the hearts and memories of all, as a great public benefactor. He has also firmly and persistently refused all the favors and privileges which individuals or companies are ready to offer to public men, such as free tickets, free rides, free subscriptions to books and periodicals, and everything that has the look of a gift from any quarter, or on any account. "A gift blindeth the eyes," says Solomon; and Mr. Wood's example is to be greately commended.

SECOND MESSAGE.

On the 11th of January, the Mayor transmitted to the Common Council his general message, representing the condition of affairs, with his recommendations of such measures as he judged needful. The permanent debt of the city, redeemable from the sinking fund, is $13,960,856; which is reduced by the sinking fund, and other assets, to $8,779,441; and to this debt should be added the funded loans redeemable from the taxes, making the total indebtedness $9,933,441, the interest of which is all provided for by the revenues of the sinking fund. The amounts which have been

raised by taxation have increased, in eleven years, from $1,988,818, in 1844, to the enormous sum of $5,918,593, to be raised in 1855—an increase of 200 per cent. The taxes for this year are very nearly three times as much as in 1844—a fearful tale ; and yet the amount could well be borne, if money's worth were realized for the expenditure. The Mayor does not hesitate to affirm "that it is the undue, unnecessary, extraordinary outlays, without sufficient equivalent, that have swollen our taxes to their present enormous amount."

He then proceeds to point out some of the various ways in which the expenditure can be reduced, and peculation and other fraud and waste prevented. He would simplify the administration of business pertaining to the streets, which at present "is under the direction of six of the departments, besides several ontside Commissioners, Inspectors, Surveyors, Appraisers, and other temporary selected agents." A large share of these latter duties he would throw upon the police, and others he would dispense with. "There is no question that the several duties of the policemen are entirely too light." And then he would "consolidate all the business pertaining to streets into one department." The message is as follows :—

To the Honorable the Common Council of the city of New York:

Gentlemen :—In my communication to your Honorable Body, on the first instant, I purposely ommitted many recommendations, and subjects of interest, and promised that as soon as you were organized, and ready for business, they would be made.

It is the duty of the Mayor to communicate to the Common Council, at least once in each year, a statement of the affairs of the city. In pursuance of this duty, and of the promise made by me, I submit this communication.

The several annual reports from the executive departments have been several days before you, and no doubt thoroughly examined. In taking a survey of the affairs of the city, the first object to present, is the condition of the finances. A statement with reference to it is herewith furnished.

Permanent city debt, redeemable from the Sinking Fund, January 1st, 1855.

5 per cent.	Water Stock,	redeemable	1858	$3,000,000
5 "	"	"	1860	2,500,000
5 "	"	"	1870	3,000,000
6 "	"	"	1875	255,600
5 "	"	"	1880	2,147,000
5 & 6 "	Croton Water Stock,	"	1890	1,000,000
7 "	Water Loan,	"	1857	990,488
5 "	Public Building Stock,	"	1856	515,000
5 "	Building Loan Stock No. 3,	"	1870	75,000
5 "	Do. " 4,	"	1873	75,000
5 "	Fire Indemnity Stock,	"	1868	402,768
				$13,960,856

Corporation stocks and bonds held by the Commissioners of the Sinking Fund, on account of redemption of the city debt	$4,252,289	
Additional assets (bonds and mortgages) held by the Commissioners on said account	911,886	
Balance in bank, Jan. 1, 1855	17,240	5,181,415
Actual am't of permanent debt, Jan. 1, 1855, say		$8,779,441

which is a reduction, as compared with the amount of debt, January 2, 1854, of $460,246.

Funded debt redeemable from taxation, and payable (with the exception of Public Education Stock,) in annual instalments of $50,000, January 1st, 1855.

6 per cent.	Building loan stock, No. 2, redeemable in 1855 and 1856		$100,000
5 "	Public Building Stock, No. 3, redeemable in 1857 and 1864		400,000
5 "	Stock for Docks and Slips, redeemable in 1867 and 1876		500,000
5 "	Public Education Stock, redeemable in 1873 . .		154,000
Total am't of funded debt, Jan. 1, 1855			$1,154,000

which is an increase, as compared with the amount of debt, January 2, 1854, of $204,000.

The revenues of the Sinking Fund, for the payment of interest on the

city debt, are fully adequate for the payment of interest on the above stocks. The balance to this account, January 1, 1855, being $60,000, invested temporarily in revenue bonds of the city Corporation, and cash in bank $317,106 11—thus rendering it unnecessary to raise *any amount* for "interest on city debts" by taxation.

In connection with this statement. another is presented, of the amounts which have been raised, by taxation, from 1844 to 1854, inclusive:

1844	$1,988,818 56
1845	2,096,191 18
1846	2,520,146 71
1847	2,581,776 30
1848	2,715,510 25
1849	3,005,762 52
1850	3,230,085,02
1851	2,924,455 94
1852	3,380,511 05
1853	5,067,275 69
1854	4,845,386 07
And to be raised in 1855	5,918,593 25

By this it will appear that the expenditures have gradually and steadily increased, though it is well known that the character of our government has deteriorated.

The people of this city cannot realize that the actual cost of conducting their municipal affairs amounts to the sum annually expended. They do not believe that all of the money appropriated is devoted to public wants. In my opinion, an examination of the subject, and close scrutiny of the various items composing the accounts of the disbursing officers, will show that it is the undue, unnecessary, extraordinary outlays, without sufficient equivalent, that have swollen our taxes to their present enormous amount.

It behooves us, as guardians of the public interests, to look to the subject. If it is longer permitted, we are *particeps criminis*, whether the money is spent under our own eyes or not. Besides greater caution in appropriations, we are called upon to exercise more vigilance over, and demand severer accountability from those who spend the money. The smallest items of expenditure should be guarded as sacredly as if amounting to hundreds of thousands. The principle which will permit a disbursing officer to divert the value of one dollar, in money or pro-

perty, to his own or his friend's purpose, will, in time, render him a defaulter or a peculator.

The treasury can be relieved in many ways; several present sources of expenditure can be abolished entirely, and large sums be brought into the treasury, which now go to the pockets of individuals.

THE STREETS.

The street openings and subsequent heavy outlays for that purpose in regulating, grading, paving, sewering, repairing, &c., are one of the heaviest burdens we bear. It is no answer to reply that much of it is returned to the treasury by assessments upon the property benefited; it is of little importance to the party who pays, whether the money is procured from him under pretext of adding to the value of his real estate, or whether under the plea of supporting the government.

We have no right to make distinction:—It is our duty to protect the private property of the people, as well as their public treasury. As now conducted, the public business appertaining to streets is under the direction of six of the departments, besides several outside Commissioners, Inspectors, Surveyors, Appraisers, and other temporary selected agents. The law officer superintends the selection of Commissioners of Estimates and Assessments to open, examines titles to property effected, and counsels the legal proceedings necessary in opening, widening, and altering streets.

The Street Department advertises for proposals to open, makes contracts therefor, and through its bureau makes and collects assessments; it also has charge of the opening, regulating and paving. The Croton Aqueduct Department attends to the sewerage and laying Croton water pipes.

The Repairs and Supplies has control of repairing, relaying pavements, curb and gutter, &c.

The Streets and Lamps place lamp-posts, and superintends the lighting and cleaning.

The City Inspector's Department attends to the removing of nuisances, carrying off dead horses, and other animals, and has general charge of everything relating to the streets, which affect their sanitary condition. Each has numerous subordinates with light duties, but large compensation. Commissioners are appointed for each job, even to "*declare*" a street opened but for one block, and though it may remain closed for a quarter of a century afterwards. Many of these persons, really and in fact, in person perform no actual duties, and are compensated in pro-

portion to the delays produced and money expended. These places are often given as the reward for other than official service, which is not of much value to the city; some of this class may be called "professional street openers," whose time is devoted to the procuration of jobs of this kind, and by getting resolutions through the Common Council to "open" when there is no necessity for it; they are strong in partizan influence.

The law which gives to a majority of the property holders, to be effected by an improvement when unnecessary, the power to prevent, is inoperative before them; several instances have been recently brought to my attention, in which their influence over the Common Council has suppressed the voice of two thirds of the parties in interest who had remonstrated against their further proceedings. If pressed, they obtain delay in the Common Council, until all they can make out of the job is procured, when they magnanimously withdraw their opposition, and the city must foot the bill, and their "estimate and assessments" amount to nothing. Some of these persons have several streets on hand at the same time, and make large sums of money. It is but proper to add, that sometimes there are commissioners who are not comprehended within this description of them as a class.

Another class, more useless though not so expensive, is the inspectors appointed to superintend the grading, regulating and cleaning of streets, building of sewers, docks, piers, &c. Some of these people seldom see the work for which they are appointed inspector, and if they do, they know nothing of it, or do not wish to know, provided the contractor is a clever fellow, and does "what is right."

These departments frequently come in conflict with each other; it sometimes happens that they are nearly all engaged at the same time, upon some part of the same street. It often occurs, that soon after the paving is completed, it is taken up to lay down a sewer, Croton water or gas pipes. Each department being independent and sometimes inimical to the other, no concert exists; but every one, upon its own notions, proceeds to do what it deems best, without thinking or caring of expense or public convenience.

It is no exaggeration to say, that sometimes twenty officials, belonging to different departments, are engaged in doing at the same time that which could be accomplished by one man, if acting for himself, in one-twentieth the time and at one-twentieth the cost.

Each department is its own master and acts upon its own volition, without consent or consultation, and not unfrequently strives to thwart

the plans of each other, and produce confusion. Every person having the control of private business or interest, can see, without further comment, the reason why so large a sum is expended upon our streets.

The business-care, concentration, uniformity and regularity so essential to the success of any enterprise, is entirely wanting.

A general cutting-up and distribution of authority, creating irresponsibility and negligence, is productive of profligacy in expenditure and inefficiency in the performance of work. This abuse must be reformed. It has become too serious to be permitted longer.

The little time which has been left me for investigation, consistent with other duties, has satisfied me that the whole business should be entirely under the control of one department, and at least one of the existing departments could be abolished entirely. There should be a Street Department, having sole jurisdiction over the whole subject; some part of the duty could be advantageously given to other departments, without detriment or additional expense.

There should be a permanent Board of Commissioners, instead of three for each job as now, which should have the power to appoint permanent surveyors for the whole city, instead of one for each work as now. It should be made the duty of the law officer of the Corporation to give his services, without additional compensation, directly or indirectly; and if receiving fees, the amount should be paid into the treasury.

There should be one or two permanent inspectors for the whole city, provided any is required, which I doubt, instead of one for each job, as now. The duties now performed by the Bureau of Assessments should be done by the present Board of Tax Commissioners, without additional compensation, who have not only sufficient leisure, but the surveys, maps and the assessed values of every improved and unimproved lot in the city within their own office, by which to facilitate the duty. The collection of assessments should be made by the Receiver of Taxes.

That branch of the service coming under the head of repairs should be severely scrutinized, and every dollar accounted for under the most stringent rules of accountability, and nothing should be expended except upon previous appropriation, with specific reference to the object for which the money was intended. The inconvenience and delays which would attend previous appropriations upon detailed estimates, for even small sums, could be of little consideration as compared with the principle of unauthorized expenditures with the official profligacy which too often follows in its train.

TAXABLE PROPERTY.

Another matter of much importance is the feasibility of enlarging the basis upon which to levy tax. The board of Tax Commissioners, organized a few years since, has added much to the taxable basis of real and personal estate. There is yet room for increase.

Notwithstanding the vigilance of these officers and the assessors, a very large amount of personal property escapes, and an undue proportion is consequently put upon real estate. A distinction is thus created entirely unjust to real property, calculated not only to affect its value, but to retard the growth of the city. There is no solid reason why distinction should be made in the kind of value, whether real or personal, upon which we levy taxes. So long as the principle of taxation is upon *property, all* property should bear alike.

Besides the large amount of personal estate that escapes in consequence of the inability to discover it, there are immense amounts belonging to foreign manufacturers and traders, in the hands of agents resident here, who refuse to recognize our authority to collect. A very large sum thus gets clear.

This foreign property receives all the protection which the city government affords, in common with that of our own people, which pays the expense.

These foreign owners not only enjoy equal privileges with native citizens, but, in not paying taxes upon their property, possess an exemption which enables them to compete with American labor, and affording them undue advantages.

People who pay taxes, cannot sell merchandise as low as those who pay none. Means should be taken during the present session of the legislature to procure the passage of a law, making the property of foreign manufacturers and others liable to taxation.

ABOLITION OF FEES.

As a further means of revenue, I recommend an application to the legislature for a law which will bring into the treasury the large sums now received by the Register, County Clerk, Counsel to the Corporation, Corporation Attorney, and other county officers, who receive fees as their own perquisites.

In some instances these sums are said to amount to from twenty to thirty thousand dollars per annum to one person. Whilst it is right that every public officer should be sufficiently compensated, yet there can

be no good reason for permitting a few to amass large fortunes, whilst other officials, who perform more labor and more responsible duties, are paid one-fifth the sum, and the whole community is burdened with taxes. Give liberal salaries, but let all fees go to the treasury.

INTEREST TO BE CHARGED.

A further relief may be found in requiring interest on deposits with the City Treasurer, and collecting and disbursing officers generally. The equity, practicability and importance of this measure is so apparent, that it surprises me it has not sooner been adopted. A very large revenue could be thus derived. There was to the credit of the city in the hands of the Treasurer, on the 28th of November, 1854, over one million of dollars; the 1st of December, 1854, over one and a half millions—from which was drawn on these dates about a half a million, leaving about two millions to the credit of the city. Additional large sums have since been drawn—leaving, however, on the first of January instant, a balance, remaining to the credit of the city of one million two hundred and eight-three thousand four hundred and seventy-four dollars, for which the city receives no allowance of interest whatever.

It is proper to add, that it frequently occurs that the City Chamberlain is in advance to the city, and that during the last year he advanced fifty to sixty thousand dollars, on claims on the treasury, for which warrants could not be given—thus offering facilities to individuals having claims, who otherwise would be obliged to wait the slow process of legislation, to be paid their just dues. Notwithstanding, however, this accommodating disposition upon the part of this officer, I can see no reason for conducting the financial affairs of the city upon any other principle than that which governs the commercial intercourse of individuals.

I am satisfied that the nearer we approximate the laws of trade, the better will public business be conducted, and the interests of the treasury protected.

The city is obliged to pay interest when using the funds of individuals, and it should receive inrerest from individuals who have the use of its money.

Last year the Comptroller borrowed, upon Revenue Bonds, three millions six hundred and ninety-three thousand dollars, nearly the whole of which was borrowed at the rate of *seven* per centum, and for which we are still paying interest, notwithstanding the large amount now lying to the credit of the city in bank. How long could an individual

or a banking institution retain its credit or its capital, that conducted its affairs upon so ruinous a principle? The state of New York discovered the value of its own revenues when lying in bank-vaults, as early as 1826; it then adopted the policy of requiring interest upon its canal funds, which has been followed since, without deviation. My last advices from the Capitol, state that two millions and a half of dollars have been already received from that source, for interest exclusively, on the deposits of this fund with the banks; and it is well known that some of the heads of the city collecting and disbursing bureau, have been in the practice of receiving interest from various city banks, on the public money in their hands, which has gone into their own pockets as private perquisites.

In recommending a revenue from this source, I beg to be understood that no step should be taken in effecting it, which would in the least jeopard the security of the money. Security is the first consideration.

A prudent business man never hazards his principal in efforts to accumulate interest; but if safety and profit can be combined—and in my judgment it can be—we should be largely the gainers; and to that extent taxation would be lessened.

ESTIMATES AND APPROPRIATIONS.

Another object of importance, by which large sums now extracted from the treasury could be saved, is the necessity of adopting some mode by which all disbursing officers shall be prevented from the expenditure of money, or creation of obligations to pay, for which the city is liable without previous appropriation, and a balance unexpended to meet it.

Many abuses have grown up under the present loose manner of expending money.

It is useless to ask the departments for estimates upon which to base the appropriation, if they are disregarded afterwards. So long as the Common Council pass resolutions incurring expense, and the departments execute them, frequently by using funds appropriated for other purposes; so long will our taxes continue to increase, and the enormous annual deficiencies, now so common, continue to startle us at the end of the year.

Means should be taken to stop this altogether; the head of a department should not be allowed to exceed his own estimates, or the appropriation made; he and his bonds should be made responsible to the city, for any liability thus incurred.

Disbursing officers must be confined within the spirit, as well as the letter of the charter, which provides that *no money* shall be drawn from the city treasury, except the same shall have been previously appropriated to the purpose for which it is drawn.

An honest version of this provision makes it applicable to the creation of an obligation, to be liquidated out of subsequent appropriation, as it is to that directly referred to.

SUSPENDED SALES FOR TAXES AND ASSESSMENTS.

You should also take measures to collect above seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars from the suspended sales for taxes and assessments, which can be obtained upon the necessary legislative action empowering the Comptroller to proceed. The sum is sufficiently large to demand your immediate attention.

CONTRACTS.

The present mode of making contracts is defective. Notwithstanding the improvement of late years, in exacting more publicity, in opening bids, and in guarding against favoritism in granting contracts, yet it is supposed much wrong still exists. There is no doubt that frauds are still perpetrated in this branch of the public service. Bids are frequently put in in the name of fictitious persons, ranging from a high to a low estimate—speculators standing ready to take advantage of any embarrassment to the department, owing to the non-appearance of the false bidder, and to get the contract at the highest possible limits. Again it is the practice to put in estimates, not with the expectation of making and performing a contract, but to be bought off by some more responsible party, who has been under-bid. Various other ways, the details of which are known only to the initiated, are in vogue, by which to defraud the treasury. If the head of a department acts in collusion with these outsiders, it is next to impossible to prevent frauds under the present system.

One of the best safeguards may be found in more general publicity, in offering to receive proposals. The expense of advertising is of no importance, as compared with the benefit to be derived from it.

The object of offering public proposals to make contracts, is to invite competition and prevent the high prices which monopoly produces; it is defeated if the advertisement is published in obscure papers, unknown to and unread by the mass of the people.

Too much publicity cannot be given to the offering of contracts; the

expense of general advertising will be more than made up by the increased bidding, and consequent reduced prices.

CITY RAILROADS AND OMNIBUSSES.

I also recommend the taxation of city railroad cars. It appears to me that these companies should pay at least one hundred dollars license upon each car, besides keeping the streets and avenues through which their tracks are laid in complete repair, and always clean.

The city government receives no equivalent for the privileges these roads possess, which are not very valuable. So far as rail-travel in this city can affect them, the present roads may be said to have a monopoly. A recent state law secures their grants, and in effect precludes opposition or annoyance; they occupy, to the exclusion of all other citizens, the centre of our best business avenues.

Exclusive privileges are always to be deprecated, but when granted, the city should in return receive an ample pecuniary equivalent. A revenue of $40,000 could be procured from this source, besides the saving of the very heavy cost of repairing and cleaning the thoroughfares.

The omnibusses should also keep in repair and clean the streets through which they pass, or pay into the treasury a sufficient sum for that purpose.

These vehicles do more injury to the pavements than all the rest of the travel together, and the city in return receives no pecuniary aid from them, for that purpose, whatever. The existing lines of omnibusses are well secured in their privilege, having, by the law of 1854, made it so difficult to procure licenses for competing lines, that they now enjoy almost a monopoly. How far the out-town railroad lines, entering the city, are subject to municipal regulations, I am not at this time enabled to advise; my opinion however is, that there is nothing in their charters entitling them to exception from any tax which you may deem a fair equivalent for the right of way they now possess.

If, upon consultation with the Counsel of the Corporation, there be no legal obstacle, I make the same recommendation as to a car tax, and the cleaning and repairs of the avenues and streets through which they pass, as made with reference to the city railroads.

EMIGRANTS.

It is well known that for many years extortions and oppressions of the most inhuman character have been practised upon the emigrants coming to this port.

There appears to be a series of organized classes of persons, all connected, and acting from a common impulse of plunder, who take, and keep possession of their victims as long as a sixpence is left to rob them of. These vampires form a cordon, stretching from Sandy Hook to the lakes—and to the far West.

They act in concert, with a well-formed understanding, and spend large sums to protect themselves from detection and punishment. Common humanity, as well as the honor and prosperity of this city and state, call for more stringent laws and regulations governing our whole emigrant system. I regret that this, already too lengthy communication, prevents more extended comments upon this branch of the subject, consistent with others demanding attention.

Much inconvenience to the shipping interest is caused by the present mode of landing emigrant passengers.

As now conducted it is a serious evil, not only to the passengers, but also to the vessels from which they land, and to other vessels with which they materially interfere. This is also an evil calling for some action at your hands—as now conducted it is productive, of great hardship to the emigrant and injury to others.

Now a ship arrives from sea with her decks crowded with hundreds of men, women and children, and hauls outside and alongside another vessel at her berth, discharging or taking in cargo, which may be composed of fine goods in valuable packages.

As soon as the emigrant ship nears the wharf, she is boarded by an army of runners, cartmen and others, having business with, and too often design upon her passengers, and the passengers are dragged over the vessel discharging, to the shore; her cargo, which may be on deck, or upon the dock, is not only materially injured, the packages soiled, broken or stolen, but an embargo is laid upon all work for the time being. Thus a serious injury is inflicted. This evil has grown to be intolerable. The remedy is very simple. One or two piers should be set aside, away from the pressure of shipping, and exclusively devoted to the landing of emigrant passengers. They should be inclosed, and only persons properly clothed with authority, and of good character, be permitted within the inclosure. The police could be stationed there to protect and direct the emigrants, and, as the boarding-houses and forwarding officers would, of course, locate in the vicinity, the emigrants would be benefited, as well as the present injury to other shipping entirely removed. These suggestions are important, and I hope will be acted on.

It has long been the practice of many governments on the continent of Europe, to get rid of convicts and paupers by sending them to this country, and most generally to this port. The increase of crime here, can be traced to this cause rather than to a defect in the criminal laws, or their administration. An examination of the criminal and pauper records, shows conclusively, that it is but a small proportion of these unfortunates who are natives of this country. One of the very heaviest burdens we bear is the support of these people, even when considering the direct cost; but when estimating the evil influences upon society, and the contaminating effect upon all who come within the range of their depraved minds, it becomes a matter exceedingly serious, and demanding immediate and complete eradication. I know no subject of more importance; certainly we have the power to protect this city against the landing of so vile an addition to our population; the health, as well as the life and property of the people for whom you legislate, requires some action at your hands. I am confident the general government will listen to any representations from you, relating to it, and interpose its national authority in our behalf. On the 2d instant I made this grievance the subject of an official communication to the President of the United States, a copy of which is annexed, marked A.

The constantly increasing expenses of the Alms-house Department, and the want of control of the Corporation over them, should not escape your notice. I am satisfied that, whatever may be thought as to the exercise of proper economy upon the part of the Governors of the Alms-house, there can be no doubt that one cause of the present large outlay required, is the maintenance of persons who should be a charge upon the fund under the exclusive control of the Emigrant Commissioners. It is evident, that the object in creating this Board was to have full control over the whole subject, and to bear the entire costs of the support of these unfortunate people—at least, until they have been five years in this country. In practice, this appears not to be its operation. At least a portion of the inmates of the institutions under the control of the Alms-house Governors, who are supported by the city, are properly chargeable to the Emigrant Commission. In my opinion the whole subject requires revision. An entire alteration of the present system is absolutely demanded. As it is now, the tax payers of this city have not only to support the poor of the city, and a portion of that belonging to the surrounding country, which find their way here, but also a very large portion of the paupers of every nation in Europe.

The absolute cost of supporting *our own* poor would be a trifle too small to be worthy of comment; but when required to perform the duty for so many other communities, its burden has become of too great a magnitude to be submitted to longer. The Board of Emigrant Commissioners was created in 1847, to protect and provide for the emigrants arriving at this port; a fund is provided for this purpose. It is a state institution, mostly under the control of officers appointed by the Governor and Senate, and in all respects independent of our municipal action. Its existence is a recognition of the position that the persons called emigrants should, in no respect, be a tax upon this country. As now conducted, it is a grievous tax. We support the emigrant criminal sentenced to Blackwell's Island, and other city penal institutions. A large number of policemen are detailed especially for their protection, for which our treasury pays. The Mayor's office and no inconsiderable portion of his time are occupied in hearing and determining cases involving the rights and property of emigrants, to say nothing of that branch of his duties relating to the proper licensing and regulating of emigrant boarding-houses and runners. In my opinion the city should be relieved altogether from these duties and expenses. So far as the state assumes to take charge of these people, she should carry out the work entire; we should be relieved from it.

POLICE.

This department of the city government is placed more directly under the personal supervision of the Mayor than others; and, in assuming its direction, with the restricted power as to appointment and removal, which, after all, constitute the great elements of control, I feel much responsibility and concern; its present condition and discipline is susceptible of improvement.

There is an apparent want of energy and efficiency, which must arise from either defect in the system or want of nerve and vigilance in those who direct it. It shall be my aim to remedy these omissions. I shall require the strictest accountability from the men, and also from the several officers—who shall, in all cases, be made responsible for the conduct of the subordinates under their command.

It was thought that making the police hold office during good behavior, would remove it entirely from political influences. It may have had such an effect, to a degree; but whilst the power to appoint, suspend and remove is political and elective, it will be expecting too

much of human nature to suppose that political influence can be excluded altogether.

A perfect police system must be founded upon freedom from all influences except those produced by merit, arising from a faithful and efficient discharge of duty.

When the generals of an army are periodically subjected to change, and in some measure by the votes and influences of the army itself, it will be almost impossible to remove the partisan elements which, *at every election*, are necessarily aroused into activity.

The whole Police Board was elected at the late election, two of the late board (the Recorder and City Judge) being candidates for re-election; and *policemen* would have been more or less than man, if they could have remained indifferent spectators of the result.

I am confident the judiciary is not the proper authority for determining police matters; nor are its members qualified, either by habits of life or train of reflection, to make good Commissioners. The bench and the service would each be benefited by a separation. My colleagues on the present Police Board fully concur in these opinions.

It shall be my aim to impress all connected with the police, that official merit, and not partisan influence, is what is expected of them; and, so far as my power extends, it shall be exercised for the entire eradication of politics from the department.

On the first of January instant, I issued new orders, a copy of which is annexed [marked B], and to which I call your attention as developing the principles upon which I shall administer the department. In connection with this subject, it may be proper for me to add, that there has been opened in the Mayor's office, under my direction, a book for recording complaints against the police, as well as for violations of the ordinances and laws, where charges will be entertained, and acted upon by me in person.

The police are required for several purposes other than the protection of the public interests of the city, for which it should not be obliged to pay.

There is one squad of the reserve corps detailed for the duty of boarding vessels from foreign ports, with emigrant passengers, and other service rendered, before referred to, which should be paid from the fund of the Emigrant Commissioners. Many other policemen are stationed at the several railroad depots and ferries, and at places of public amusement, by request of the proprietors, and for the protection of their private interests, and not for public purposes. This expense should be

borne by the parties requiring their services. In London, where the police system is said to be better than our own, such is the practice; and the General Government has adopted the same course with reference to the salaries of its custom-house officers, when acting for private convenience or safety. About thirty thousand dollars would be thus saved.

The expense of the police force has attracted attention, and it has been properly suggested that it can be used for many public purposes for which the city now pays heavily.

In considering the cost of the police, it should not be forgotten that it is almost entirely made up of salaries. This department disburses little money for any other purpose. It makes no contracts and procures no supplies; and is confined to the disbursements of such sums, for compensation to the officers and men, as has been fixed by the Common Council. Be it more or less, no officer connected with it is in any way responsible. It is true, that much duty, now performed by subordinates under other departments, can be performed by the police, without impairing its efficiency. My direction has already been given to the patrolmen to act as street inspectors, and to report, through their officers, to me every instance when the contractor fails to clean the streets within his district. They have also been required to report all excavations made under the sidewalks or streets, by builders or others—the object of which is to supply information to the Commissioner of Streets, by which he can collect the legal claims of the city for appropriating to private use any portion of the streets.

If my recommendation of consolidating all business appertaining to streets into one department, is carried out, many collateral branches can be put under the Police Department, without any detriment to it whatever.

There is no question that the several duties of policemen are entirely too light, in view of the necessity of materially lessening the number of public officers.

It is for you to legislate upon this recommendation, and you will find me ready to enforce its practical operation.

SPRING CHARTER ELECTION.

I cannot omit expressing my conviction that much benefit could be derived to the city, by separating the election for charter officers from that for state or national officers.

As now conducted, our local interests are almost entirely lost sight of in the conflict on state or national issues. As the lesser is always absorbed by the greater, so is the apparently smaller affairs of our city

government lost sight of in the contest on candidates for higher offices. The magnitude of our municipal interests calls for the closest scrutiny into the qualifications of persons to take charge of them; no other considerations than those connected directly with local questions should be included in the canvass for city rulers. The evils of frequent elections are of little importance, as compared with the danger of the selection of improper men. In the struggle for a governor or a president, persons entirely disqualified will sometimes slide unobserved into a local place of trust and power.

The election law, which places the candidates for county officers on the same ballot with candidates for state officers, increases the evil. At the late election there were twelve names on the same ballot; in the haste and excitement of election day, it is very difficult for even the most intelligent voter to select the names for whom he desires to vote, when found upon the same ticket; but where the duty is imposed upon the illiterate or ignorant, it is seldom exercised, especially if there be a cunningly-devised ballot, not permitting erasure or substitution.

CENTRAL PARK.

The Commissioners appointed to open the Central Park, are progressing with the work. Since the organization of the Board, it has collected and examined evidence of title to the lands to be taken for the park; in causing the necessary surveys, maps of blocks and profiles of grades to be made in personal view of the lands to be taken, and in procuring such information in regard thereto, as may serve to guide to a just valuation of the same; also in determining the area of assessment for special benefit, and procuring maps of the same, and in procuring evidence of the value of the improvements on the land to be taken; and are now engaged in the valuation of the lands themselves. It will be remembered that this park is to be bounded south by Fifty-ninth street, north by One hundred and sixth street, east by the Fifth avenue, and west by the Eighth avenue; and will comprehend an area of seven hundred and seventy-six acres, say, ... 776

From which deduct	State Arsenal, ...	14
	Croton Reservoir, ...	38
	Proposed "	112
	Streets and Avenues, . . .	190
	Belonging to the city, . . .	34–388
Leaving to be paid for—acres		388

Which, by estimating at sixteen lots per acre, makes six thousand two hundred and eight lots to be paid for by the city, and by assessments upon contiguous property. The important question of the valuation of these lots has not as yet been positively fixed by the commissioners. The subject is now before them, and I advise all who are interested to appear at their office. Another question of much public interest, in connection with this matter, is the territorial limit to which the commissioners shall extend their assessments upon property of individuals, and what proportion of the whole cost shall be made a tax upon the city.

These questions are entirely under the control of the commissioners. I am informed, unofficially, that the disposition of the Board is to extend the area of assessment three blocks east and west, and a greater distance north and south; and to make two thirds of the whole cost payable by the city. If this be the determination, it can be easily ascertained about what sum the park will cost. Estimating the average value of the land at five hundred dollars per lot—a liberal estimate—the whole cost would be three millions one hundred and four thousand dollars; deduct one third to be paid by individuals whose property is supposed to be benefited, it will leave two millions sixty-nine thousand dollars to be paid for by the city—a smaller sum than was anticipated at the time of passing the act. The commissioners expect to close their duties early in the ensuing summer. There can be no doubt as to the necessity of some such park, conveniently located on this island. In my opinion, future generations, who are to pay this expense, would have good reasons for reflecting upon the present generation, if we permitted the entire island to be taken possession of by the population, without some spot like this, devoted to rural beauty, healthful recreation, and pure atmosphere.

NEW PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

It is to be regretted that we are still without some definite action in this matter. It is a year since the old Alms-house buildings, which for several years were used for the purposes of a court-house, were destroyed by fire, and no conclusion has yet been arrived at with reference to the erection of a substitute. This should be one of the first measures to receive attention.

The present City Hall and its appendages are insufficient. The accumulation of public business of all kinds has rendered it imperative upon this city, regardless of expense, to make provision for it without delay.

Many plans for a new City Hall have been proposed, none of which have been examined by me, and of which I am not competent to judge, had they been. I will suggest, however, that, inasmuch as the day cannot be far distant when that portion of the city lying south of Grand street will entirely be occupied by wholesale business, to the exclusion of resident population, and that, as a City Hall, to contain the courts and offices for the transaction of municipal business should be in the vicinity of the numerical centre of population—whether it is politic to expend large sums of money in permanent improvements in the Park, as now located. We have no guarantee that the next generation may not demand their removal to a more convenient position. There can be no doubt that public offices, to which all classes, without distinction, are drawn, should be equally accessible to the whole population.

Nor can I recommend the adoption of a proposition recently made in the Common Council, by which the legislature is to appoint commissioners to superintend the erection of a new City Hall. The folly of transferring further legislation for this city to Albany, except to get a charter that will return to it a form of government commensurate to its wants, is so apparent, that I hope it will not be indulged in again. One legislative act after another has been adopted at Albany, until we are almost without any government whatever. There is now in preparation a proposition for the legislature to appoint six commissioners, with power to name every officer under the City Government, which, if it becomes a law, will give the extinguishing blow to what little power is left to the people of this city over their own municipal affairs.

PUBLIC SCHOOL EXPENSES.

Complaints are made of the largely increasing expenses for public school education, and the want of power of the city government over the disbursements of the Board of Education.

My attention has been called to this subject, and though there is, no doubt, room for improvement as it regards the economy evinced in the erection and fitting up of school-houses, yet the benefits derived from the system are of too great a magnitude to be jeoparded by illiberality in defraying its cost.

I have no doubt that it is the general approval of our public schools, as now conducted, that induces the people to submit to the present onerous taxation. The great improvements in the mode of culture adopted, and the evident advantage of the public schools over the private

schools of this city, have made them the general academies of tuition for the children of nearly the whole population. The cost to us in taxation is not one-fifth the usual expense for an ordinary pay school education. Indeed there are few real estate owners, with families, who cannot get their whole tax returned by sending their children to the public school, with the advantage of a better and more thorough education, and a discipline and moral training far more perfect than our fashionable "academies for young gentlemen" can pretend to.

Therefore, while discountenancing extravagance in any public department, yet having full confidence in the gentlemen who have charge of the public education of this city, and deeply appreciating the system, I cannot recommend any step towards interfering with the management of it, so long as it continues to improve the efficiency and public benefit, and holds, as it does now, the position of our brightest ornament, with the prospect of being the fruitful source from whence we are to derive yet higher honor and more brilliant results.

REVISION OF THE ORDINANCES.

I cannot too earnestly impress upon you the necessity of a revision and a collecting of the ordinances into one or more volumes, and a codification of the laws applicable to this city. It would be almost incredible to a stranger to be told that there is no collection of the laws by which this city is governed.

A collection of ordinances has not been published since 1845, and of that but few copies remain; since 1845 material amendments have been made to the charter, and numerous resolutions and ordinances have been adopted, which are now to be found only by a voyage of discovery in the office of the Clerk of the board of Aldermen, with the chance being very much against success, even with the guide of the accommodating officers who have charge of that office. The memory of persons who have for many years been connected with the Common Council is the only index in existence.

The mere statement of the fact, will, I am confident, procure action.

THE DOCKS.

The dock accommodations for the shipping of the city, is another subject which should receive notice. You need not be informed that at present they are totally inadequate, both in extent and quality. There is no commercial city in the world, of the magnitude of New York, so

deficient; substantial stone or iron docks and piers should be constructed, which would not only be durable, but in the result far more economical than those now in use.

A funded debt could be created for the payment of the cost, leaving to posterity, who are to be the recipients of the advantages derived from the construction, the liquidation of the obligation. The present, as well as the future accomodations for the shipping, which constitute so great an element in our prosperity, demand some action at your hands on this subject.

NON-PAYMENT OF CONTRACTORS AND OTHERS.

Much distress has recently been caused by persons having demands against the city, owing to the non-payment of salaries, and for supplies furnished and contracts performed. Great injury has resulted to many individuals of small means from this cause. At any time, disappointments of this kind bear oppressively, but at a period of great monetary stringency, like the present, it is a hardship exceedingly onerous and should not again occur. Besides the wrong done to the party having a just claim, in omitting to meet the demand, the injury to the treasury is not insignificant. We need not be told that a poor paymaster has to pay higher prices than he who meets his engagements promptly.

It is not unreasonable to expect that the city creditors will provide themselves against the loss arising from the difficulty in getting their dues, by charging sufficiently to cover the loss arising from these delays. Without recommending any relaxation in adherence to the laws and ordinances governing the disbursement of money, I cannot omit to express the hope that you will take immediate means to prevent a recurrence of so great an evil to the creditors of the city, and preserve its faith and credit from dishonor.

RELIEF TO BROADWAY.

Another relief to the citizens could be found in the adoption of some mode to prevent the large collection of omnibuses in Broadway below the Park. In my opinion this evil should not be longer permitted.

If the stages, now permitted to go to the South Ferry, were limited to one half the present number, the whole difficulty would be remedied. The many lines entering Broadway below the Park, not only obstruct the passage of each other, but frequently cut off entirely the passage of smaller vehicles. Foot passengers are excluded almost entirely from the cross-walks.

This evil is increasing, though the police, at an expense to the city, is kept on duty to prevent disorder, and to aid passengers in crossing.

The present laws deprive the Mayor of power over the omnibuses, so far as controlling their routes or their number, but I recommend that an ordinance be passed preventing any one line sending more than one stage in ten minutes, below the Park, in Broadway. The little inconvenience which this restriction would cause to persons having business below the Park would be of no consideration compared to the present difficulties.

I also recommend that the Russ pavement in Broadway be grooved. Though this beautiful and durable pavement is an ornament as well as advantage to the city, yet its smoothness renders it dangerous to horses. Its solidity retains moisture, which, when freezing, presents a surface of ice, rendering its use extremely dangerous.

CATTLE DRIVING.

The practice of driving cattle through the streets of the city is another evil calling for prompt action. It is an abuse which our citizens have submitted to too long. In my opinion this Common Council will deserve the severest censure, if, like its predecessors, it timidly skulks from its duty in ridding us of this dangerous nuisance. Not only is the health of the whole population jeoparded by the unwholesome odors arising from the collection of these animals, but it not unfrequently occurs that life, limb, and property are destroyed by it.

DIRTY STREETS.

In April, 1854, contracts were entered into for the cleaning of streets and avenues of the city. The specifications of these contracts are stringent, and there would be no cause of complaint if the contractors performed them. They provide that every thoroughfare shall be thoroughly and properly cleaned and swept, and all the dirt, manure, ashes, garbage, rubbish and sweeping, of every kind, removed twice a week; and in Broadway and the leading avenues, three times a week. If these conditions were complied with, there could be no grounds of complaint. I regret to say they have not been complied with, and though it is stated that, in consequence of the low rates at which the contracts are taken, compliance is impossible without heavy loss, yet, in my opinion, there is no other resource than to demand a rigid fulfillment. If contracts are to be thrown up, or only half performed, at the will of contractors, because not profitable, the bargain is all on one side. Under

this ruling, the city is to suffer in any event. So far as the law gives me power, I shall require a strict compliance with the existing contracts to clean the streets; and that I may know which of the contractors are derelict, the police have been ordered to make the condition of the streets, in their several beats, the subject of observation, and to report every day the result.

I am not prepared to make any recommendations with reference to the Executive Departments not alluded to herein. I shall communicate to you, from time to time, such matters relating to them as call for your action.

FERNANDO WOOD.

Mayor Wood proposes to increase the revenue by obtaining from the Legislature the power of taxing the personal property in the city, belonging to non-residents: by requiring all fees to be paid into the city treasury: by exacting interest—as is done by the State—upon the deposits of the Treasurer in the banks. Some officers of the city are known to receive such interest for their own use. About $750,000 can be realized by collections from the suspended sales of property for taxes and assessments. A doubtful expedient, in our view, is his proposal to tax omnibuses and railroad-cars, because it is so difficult to calculate the injurious effect of burdens upon locomotion and transportation. In fact, no taxation is so certain to be both equitable and safe as that which is laid directly upon property. All obstructions of lawful and productive industry are detrimental. He thinks the city is subjected to very large expenses on account of emigrants, which the State ought to pay through its Board of Emigration.

He points out "the necessity of adopting some mode by which all disbursing officers shall be prevented from the expenditure of money, or *creation of obligations to pay*, for which this city is liable, without previous appropriation." Numerous abuses have arisen here. "It is useless to ask the departments for estimates on which to base the appropriation, if they are disregarded afterwards. So long as the Common Council pass resolutions incurring expense—and the departments execute them frequently by using funds appropriated for other purposes—so long will our taxes continue to

increase, and the erroneous annual deficiencies, now so common, continue to startle us from year to year." Doubtless, the master-evil of the whole system is indistinctly alluded to here—the continued interference of the Boards and their committees with the executive business of the city. We shall speak of this again.

The Mayor then treats of the city contracts, emigrants, the police, elections in the spring, the Central Park, new City Hall, public school expenses, revision and codification of the city ordinances, the docks, non-payment of contractors, relief to Broadway, cattle-driving, and dirty streets.

We may say of these messages that they present comprehensive and statesmanlike views, are based upon sound principles, and evince the most profound and anxious thought, and an honest desire to promote the welfare of the city, and a firm purpose on the part of the Mayor of doing his own duty, at whatever cost to himself, and whoever else may do or neglect theirs. So far as these suggestions pertain to the province of the Common Council, if they were addressed to a body of honorable, upright, and patriotic men, we should expect vast benefits from seeing them put in practice. Whether any such expectations will be realized from the action of the present Boards, we shall be better able to tell a few months hence. But we are compelled to confess that their progress and method in the public business thus far, do not inspire us with very sanguine hopes in that quarter. Let us wait for still the best.

We do, indeed, find that the Mayor has so far secured the co-operation of the Board of Aldermen, that they have passed an order authorizing him to examine the books and accounts of *any person holding office* under the municipal government, whenever, in his judgment, the public interests require such examination. His energetic and successful movements have also arrested the attention of the Legislature at Albany, which teems with projects of alterations, and amendments, and substitutes, destined to aid or to stop him, to cripple or to strengthen his efforts, to neutralize or to perpetuate the benefits he is bringing upon the community. But in the city itself, we fear that the success of his endeavors is likely

to be confined almost entirely to one department—that of police. The amendments in the other branches of the municipal administration appear to be, for the most part, transient, doubtful, or illusory. The reason is plain: those departments are independent of the Mayor's control. He neither appoints, nor has power to remove, the incumbents of any one of the "nine Executive Departments, having undefined, doubtful, and conflicting powers, with heads elected by the people; each assuming to be sovereign and independent of the others, of the Mayor, or of any other authority." By securing, as we presume he has done, the cordial co-operation of the City Judge and the Recorder, who, together with himself, constitute the appointing power and adjudicating tribunal of the police, he will be able to maintain a degree of control over that one branch. On the others he may safely experiment, to learn the degree of force there may be in "moral suasion" to stem the tide of misgovernment and corruption. But we do not anticipate that he will produce a concert of action of the different departments which manage the business of the streets, or bring about so wonderful an event as to have the streets actually swept at stated intervals, and swept *clean*, or settle the conflicts of jurisdiction between the Ten Governors of the Alms-House and the Common Council, or interpose even a slight check upon the wasteful and irresponsible expenditures of those bodies respectively. The Board of Governors ecently invited the Legislature to visit in a body the several public institutions of the city, and appropriated sundry thousands of dollars of the funds placed at their disposal for the poor, to be expended in costly entertainments on the occasion, with ample store of wines and liquors, which produced disgraceful intoxication to a melancholy extent among their guests. It is a great thing to have our city governed, even to the extent in which Mayor Wood governs, and will govern it, through the police that he has under his control; and for the time—we hope a long time—that he may continue to adorn the office he holds. But "New York governed" is one thing—a municipal government for New York is quite another thing, and is still a desideratum to be supplied. We want a

proper frame of government that will be in force when Mr. Wood is no longer Mayor. We should want it for the objects which he cannot reach, were his mayoralty immortal, as its fame is sure to be.

FORM OF MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT.

What is a proper frame of government for the city of New York? We cordially approve and earnestly recommend most of the general views presented by the Mayor in his Inaugural Message. The absurdities of the present nine-headed machine cannot be made more striking by any additional remarks of ours. No society or body of men could ever do business or be guided or governed under such an incongruous organization. Still less can a great city be made safe, or healthy, or peaceful, with its government divided into nine independent departments, all irresponsible and all especially resolved not to yield one to another. We cannot attach as much importance as Mr. Wood and many others have done, to the proposal of separating our municipal elections from those of the State and the Nation, by appointing them to be held in the spring. It looks very well in theory, to separate our city government from the dictation of great parties, and from the turmoil and confusion of a presidential campaign. But the idea is a fallacious one, and cannot be realized in practice. Twenty years ago or more, we had the charter altered so as to hold our city elections in the spring; and the friends of good order flattered themselves with the hope of a peaceful and harmonious effort to elect city officers without distinction of party, for their worth and fidelity, and their ability to promote the public good. But, shortly before the election, there arose a great national question at Washington, (that of the re-charter of the Bank of the United States,) on which it was said to be of paramount importance that the commercial metropolis of the country should be heard. And so the two great parties nominated their several tickets with almost exclusive reference to their ability to command votes of certain classes for their party; and, in the issue, many of the most meritorious candidates were ruled out, and those who were elected came into office under a pressure

of partisan obligation, so that nothing at all was gained to the city by the spring election, and by general consent it was soon assimilated to the general election.

In this country, it is impossible to separate public affairs from politics. The foundation-principle of our institutions is self-government by the people; and that makes up our politics. In this country government *is* politics; and the attempt to separate them will not only fail, but will always lead to evils. We must take it as it is, and not war against the inevitable. The people will have politics, and will mingle all their public business with politics; and there is no remedy but to enlighten the people and give them good politics. The whole body is one, and it is absurd to think of making one of its members healthy while the whole head is sick and the heart faint. The evils which we suffer from wicked politics is the penalty we pay for the folly and selfishness and neglect of duty by which we allowed politics to be wicked. And if we may only have a proper frame of government for the city, by which the will of the people can be faithfully carried out for the public good in regard to local interests, it will be a powerful aid toward correcting whatever abuses exist in regard to the affairs of the State and Nation. Yet, if others deem it important to make another experiment of holding our city elections in the spring, we shall not object strenuously; but rather hope that the benefits may be realized, which are so well set forth in the Mayor's letter to Mr. Blatchford. We will quote a paragraph for future reference:

"The conclusion is inevitable, that other interests than our own influence if not control the selection of our own rulers when elected at the general election. If, under these circumstances, honest and capable men happen to be designated for us, we are indebted for it more to accident, or the interposition of Divine Providence in our favor, than to the forethought and discriminating action of the voters themselves. No; let there be a separation, irrevocable and entire; let there be but one issue, when local officers are to be chosen, and that referring to the welfare and prosperity of New York. If, differing upon national or State questions, we can unite without embarrassment or obstruction upon men fitted for charter offices, without reference to their party affinities or

associations, the considerations will be not whether they are in favor of or against any outside issues involving matters of national import, but whether in favor of an economical government for this city, and opposed to vices, immoralities, corruptions, and bad government."

The two main points to reform, which we regard as absolutely indispensable, are expressed by the phrase UNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY. Our nine independent executive governments must be brought into one, and that one made fully responsible to the people. Unless this is done, nothing will be gained by change; and it would be better that the legislature should leave the charter unaltered, and let us get along as we can under the government of Mayor Wood for the present, until further experience, study, comparison of views, and public discussion shall have prepared the way for a real reform, based upon sound principles, and calculated for permanence by its conformity to the genius of our American institutions.

To bring our executive government to a proper unity, there must be one head, which must be the source of power to all subordinates, and have the control of all. In order to this, the Mayor should have the appointment of all the other executive officers of the city, subject to the confirmation of the Board of Aldermen in regard to the heads of bureau, and the absolute power of removal of them all. A sufficient responsibility is secured by restoring annual elections, so that, after wielding this power two years, the Mayor would return to the ranks of of his fellow-citizens, either to receive their approval by re-election, or to come himself under the government to which he had given character. And, in connection with this, there must be a complete severance of the Common Council from the executive administration. Neither Board, nor both together, nor any committee of either, should have any executive function, or any power to interfere, to help or hinder, direct or control, command or forbid, in regard to any executive business. Nothing short of this will put a period to the pernicious struggles and jealousies of the Common Council against the Mayor. Let the Common Council pass ordinances for the city, and raise money

by taxation, and make specific appropriations for all necessary purposes, and impeach delinquent officers; and let the Mayor see that the laws are executed and the money properly applied, and have the power to compel all subordinate officers to do their duty, or to discharge them; and we shall then know exactly where to look for whatever is required to be done, and where to lay the blame of every failure. Then New York will have a government.

It will be seen that this differs in some essential points from the "Amended Charter of 1830," to which Mr. Wood's inaugural refers as the model government. That charter did not give the Mayor the requisite powers of appointment and removal, and did not withdraw from the Common Council and the Board of Aldermen and Assistants their power of intermeddling with executive duties. It was itself the first step in the wrong direction; and the subsequent alterations have been progressive stages in the false system of policy which was then begun, of attempting to govern a city by checks and balances, and distribution of powers, when the great necessity is for concentration of power, so as to secure unity, responsibility, and an energy which is absolutely resistless and certain to do whatever it attempts. The plan we have proposed will be at once effective and safe; for the city will never intrust such powers to any man who is not known to possess both the ability and integrity to exercise them for the public good. In choosing a man to be a cypher or a sinecure, they might be less watchful of his quality; but in choosing a Mayor to exercise such functions as these, it is absurd to suppose they would be imposed upon by any system of political chicanery to intrust the power to unworthy hands.

This change would simplify the government of the city, and would thus do more than all the contrivances of the last twenty-five years have been able to do to destroy the opportunity and the temptation for fraud and plunder. Every citizen could then understand the machinery and would feel his own individual power. The remedy for negligence and abuses would be obvious, easy, and certain. Complaints of grievances would be sure to go to the power which can redress them. By having one controlling head, the perpetual disagreements of the different bureaus would be ter-

minated, and each would become the helper of the other, because each would then be a part of the one administration. It could no longer be said, as Mayor Wood has said in his inaugural, that "we are administering the government by portions of six different charters, which create nine executive departments, having undefined, doubtful, and conflicting powers, with heads elected by the people, each assuming to be sovereign and independent of the others, of the Mayor, or of any other authority." Can the idea be formed of a more absurd system of government? Of course, "this irresponsibility has been productive of carelessness in expenditure and negligence in the execution of ordinances"—the two great evils under which we suffer.

The plan we propose would remedy just these evils, and that is precisely what we need. The Mayor, having thus the control of the several executive departments, would necessarily select for these offices men in whom he himself could place confidence, both as to their intelligence and energy, and he would thus surround himself with a number of capable and faithful men, on whose advice and co-operation he could safely lean, as a virtual cabinet council, and thus there would be a perfect co-operation in executing the laws and preserving the general interests of the city.

We are satisfied, too, that this plan will be most acceptable to the people, if it can only be presented to them as it is. The plan itself confides in the people as to their capacity for self-government. It gives them the power of selecting their own magistrates, and of watching them most perfectly, and of calling them to account most speedily. All other schemes remove power from the people, and tie up the hands of the people from controlling the administration of their affairs, and thus preclude them from holding their agents to a direct and effective accountability.

The people only want a good government. As the Mayor has well expressed it, "They ask public order, the suppression of crime and vice, clean streets, the removal of nuisances, and abolition of abuses, a restriction of taxation to the absolute wants of an economically administered government, and a prompt execution of the laws and ordinances." What apology can be given by the Legis-

lature or the Common Council for refusing to grant these reasonable demands? They ask this, and for this they are perfectly willing to pay, let the cost be what it will. They paid five millions of dollars last year as the expense of a government which did not bring them one of these benefits. They expect to pay six millions this year and every year, if they can have money's worth for their dollars—a good government, clean streets, quiet nights, a healthy atmosphere, the assurance of justice, a consciousness of the reign of law.

Unless these changes are made, and year by year until they are made, the expenses of the city government will continue to increase, and its effectiveness to diminish. The taxes for 1856 will probably be seven millions. The love of public plunder is not satiated by success, but grows by what it feeds on. The ingenuity of official fraud and peculation is not exhausted, but can devise new tricks, if legislative tinkering should succeed in stopping the rat-holes already known and open. We protest against all further tinkering of the charter by such hands as have handled it since 1830. We have tried sufficiently all the experiments of political science and political quackery, and none of them have afforded relief. Ever since the amended charter of 1830, we have been altering and amending, and matters have all the while grown worse. Relief has been sought in the wrong direction, by the diffusion rather than the concentration of power, by adding more control where we wanted more efficiency, by multiplying checks and stays when we wanted more decision and activity, by removing power and responsibility further from the people, when the true method was to bring responsibility more directly to the people as the source of power.

We have had enough of legislative interference with executive business, by committees of Aldermen and committees of Councilmen. We have had enough of boards of appointment and removal; enough of boards of control and administration. They are screens from responsibility, and hiding-places for favoritism, corruption, and peculation. Whatever appearance of energy and independence they may wear at their first institution, they inevitably lose their force in a little time, through the division of responsibility, and

the difficulty of harmonizing so many diverse views and interests, and degenerate into mere manufactories of forms and repositories of red tape. Who requires an argument to convince him that all the departments would be as thoroughly roused as the police, if they all held their offices in the same way, by the will of Mayor Wood?

The "Reform Committee" has done good, but it has failed of accomplishing the needful reform, because it did not go to the root of the evil. Having its attention directed almost exclusively to the monstrous corruptions which have grown up, they have essayed to dry up these streams, without going to the fountain-head. The waste of money is not the chief evil, but the lack of government, the filthy streets inviting pestilence, the rowdyism and violence rendering life itself insecure, the obstruction of the wharves and streets hindering the very commerce by which the city lives. It is folly to intrust the management of the reform to the Common Council; they do not represent the city on this subject, and are not likely to favor the reduction of their prerogatives, which will at the same time shut off their opportunities of speculation and personal aggrandizement.

It is the people's business, and we desire to see it taken hold of by the people, in primary assemblies. There ought to be no delay. If it can be well done, 'twere better done quickly. The loss to the city by the lack of a good government is immense—it is immeasurable, and will soon be overwhelming. The insecurity of life and property, the enormous expense without advantage, will drive commerce to other ports, unless we can have a reform; and New York, with all its advantages, may become a mere monument of past prosperity, and a monitor to the world of the evils of misgovernment. Already, we see the city of London alarmed at the diversion of its trade, through the expenses with which it is burdened, and the want of security which it encounters there.*

* "London, instead of being now chosen, as a matter of course, as the common centre towards which commercial vessels proceeding to England from all quarters of the world are to be directed, has to sustain a sharp struggle with the outports. The port of London has already lost the cotton imports—those of wool are gradu-

It is time for New York to be on the alert, and demand of the present Legislature a reformed charter, which will strike at the root of all these evils, and secure to us a government, first of all efficient and faithful, next economical as well as liberal, and last of all as secure as the imperfection of human institutions permits, against favoritism and fraudulent administration.

But we are free to say that we want no more tinkering, no more Boards, as screens from responsibility. We want a government. And we had rather things would remain as they now are, than that they should be tampered with by quackery. We had rather continue to be governed by Mayor Wood, and would hope that he may be continued in office until we obtain a government, so that the people can govern themselves.

MAYOR WOOD'S LETTER TO PRESIDENT PIERCE IN RESPECT TO THE IMPORTATION OF FOREIGN PAUPERS AND FELONS.

MAYOR'S OFFICE,
NEW YORK, January 2, 1855.

HIS EXCELLENCY FRANKLIN PIERCE,
President of the United States.

DEAR SIR:—There can be no doubt that, for many years, this port has been a sort of penal colony for felons and paupers, by the local authorities of several of the continental European nations. The desperate character of a portion of the people arriving here from those countries, together with the increase of crime and misery among that class of our population, with other facts before us, prove, conclusively, that such is the case.

It is unnecessary to refer to the gross wrong thus perpetrated upon

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ally following—and that of silk seems destined to take the same course. Bristol, once the second port in the empire, but which lost its position by imposing heavy dock charges, has seen its error, and is again entering into competition with London. Liverpool and Glasgow now absorb a large portion of the trade once monopolized by the metropolitan port. Southampton has been designated the future port of London; and when the wonderful capabilities of the harbor are taken into consideration, and due attention paid to the fact that the railway running into the docks places that town within two hours of London, it will be conceded that there is very good reason for the designation."—*London Daily News, Feb.* 1, 1855.

this city. It requires from me no allusion to the jeopardy of our lives and property from this cause. Men who, by a long career of crime and destitution have learned to recognize no laws, either civil or natural, cannot fail to produce feelings of terror at their approach.

The inherent right of every community to protect itself from dangers arising from such emigration, cannot be questioned. New York has submitted to it long enough. The disease and pauperism arriving here almost daily from abroad, is of itself a sufficient evil; but when to it is added crime, we must be permitted to remonstrate. We ask the interference of the general government; as it is its duty to protect us from foreign aggression, with ball and cannon, so it is its duty to protect us against an enemy more insidious and destructive, though coming in another form.

I call your attention to this subject, hoping it will receive from you that action which its very great importance to the whole country demands. I am very truly yours, &c.,

FERNANDO WOOD, *Mayor.*

LETTERS AND DIRECTIONS OF MAYOR WOOD TO THE POLICE OF NEW YORK.

MAYOR'S OFFICE,
NEW YORK, January 1, 1855.

SIR:—I inclose to you, through the Chief of Police, certain instructions to the men under your command, to which I ask your attention.

You will see that every requirement is complied with, and that the results be reported every day to the Chief at his office, in your usual morning return. I will also take this occasion to ask of you the most rigid adherence to the rules and regulations governing the Department, and to express the hope that discipline will be observed, without relaxation, in your district. Discipline can only be maintained by a regard to the smallest requirements of your service; it requires compliance with *every order*, however trivial or apparently unimportant—it recognizes no right in a subordinate to judge the practicability or propriety of any direction issued by a superior officer. You must be responsible for every dereliction of duty by the force under your command, for it rarely occurs that an efficient and faithful captain does not make efficient and faithful men. You will see that in your Station-houses the apartments are always cleanly, that your books are correctly and regularly kept,

and that no games are played for money, or profanity permitted; that religion and politics be entirely excluded from discussion; that loud talking and quarrelling be prevented, and that order, decorum and attention to public duties be strictly required.

Very respectfully, FERNANDO WOOD, *Mayor.*

To Capt.

of District.

MAYOR'S OFFICE,
NEW YORK, January 1, 1855.

SIR:—I have this day assumed the office of the Police Department of this city, and shall expect and require adherence to its rules and regulations. In your hands is placed the care of the property and lives, as well as the order, peace, and outward moral deportment of the whole community.

Though you cannot extirpate vice, you can do much to suppress it. Vigilance and an honest discharge of your duties, will not only enable the people to pay more for your protection by reducing the expense which crime produces, but add to the respectability of your position and to the security of its continuance. There is now dissatisfaction in the public mind with the apparent inefficiency of the police. There should be no cause for it! Let there be none! Your duties are light; the pay not illiberal; your social standing good; and the term, for which appointed, renders you independent of the contingencies to which the operative and other laboring classes are subjected. You hold positions of trust and honor to which the pride and ambition of any man need not be ashamed to aspire.

It is made my duty to see the laws faithfully executed; you are to be my aids in effecting this. I cannot look over the whole city to see that all is right; but you can for me. I rely upon you. You are to be the eyes through which the theatre of my duties is to be observed, and the messengers to convey to me, through your officers, faithful and truthful reports.

In addition to the rules and regulations now in force in the Department, and the several directions therein, you are requested to take note of and comply with the following:

It is hereby made your duty to report every day, when on duty, to your commanding officer, the following information; and an omission

to do so, and to conform to every requirement of this circular, will be deemed disobedience, and punished as such.

To report every street uncleaned, in your patrol.

Every unlicensed public house for the sale of liquor.

Every public house kept open on the Sabbath.

Every house of prostitution.

Every gambling house.

Every street not lighted at the proper hour.

Every street or side-walk encumbered, and the party or parties offending.

Every excavation made under the side-walks or streets, by builders, or others.

Every nuisance, and the party offending.

Every supposed dereliction by any officer of the Corporation.

Every violation of the city ordinances.

You are further directed to disperse all gatherings of men or boys at the corners of the streets or other public places, on the Sabbath, where disorder is produced.

To enforce the closing of public houses on the Sabbath day.

To protect the stranger or emigrant from extortion or imposition.

To remove from the streets all beggars, and direct them to the several public and private institutions created for their relief.

To see that the ordinances for the removal of snow and ice from the side-walks and gutter be promptly complied with.

You are further directed to arrest for creating riot or breaches of the peace.

For being intoxicated and disorderly in the street.

For injuring private or public property.

For stopping the free passage of the cross-walks by cartmen, coachmen, or others.

For throwing offal, garbage, vegetables, and rubbish in the streets.

For offenses of any kind against the laws.

Your faithful compliance with these directions are requested. Let no consideration induce you to omit one of them.

You have now a determined chief officer, who will not be indifferent to a single dereliction of duty upon the part of those for whose conduct he is responsible to the community.

Very respectfully,

FERNANDO WOOD, *Mayor.*

OUR MAYOR ABROAD.

The press of other cities bestows the most enthusiastic commendations upon Mayor Wood for the energy and success with which he is reforming long-neglected abuses in New York. The whole country will be benefitted by the influence of Mayor Wood's example. Among the many laudatory articles in the journals of other places we select the following brief one from the New Bedford Mercury:—

That Mayor Again.—Will any one believe that he can walk the streets of New York city after nightfall, and witness the same order and decency as in the streets of Berlin and Vienna? That is now the case. It is the old story of Hercules and the Augean stable over again. The Mayor has found out the river which will run through the city streets, and wash away all the filth. Honor to Hercules Wood! He goes into the stymphalic dens of the birds of the night, and they fall before him; he meets the hydra of Sunday tippling, and down on the hundred heads comes his club with a unanimous thwack. He hears, if not of the Nemean lion at least of a "tiger," which is an equally uncomfortable animal, and goes out to meet him—Tiger roars, but runs. He is going out to fight the great giant of respectability, called Antæus, son of the Earth, who never touches its ground-rents without renewed strength. He will lift the giant upon high (in the clear air of newspapers), and squeeze it till it leaves off renting its houses to gamblers and brothel-keepers. What will Hercules do next? Whatever there is for his hand to do, let us be assured. We shall all have enough work, if we follow his lead.

MANIFESTO FROM MAYOR WOOD

IN REFERENCE TO THE MAINE LIQUOR LAW.

Mayor Wood has issued the following manifesto, announcing the principles by which he will be guided in enforcing the new Liquor Law, so far as the duty of enforcing it may devolve on him. The principles enunciated by the Mayor will meet with the approval of all law-abiding citizens. Whatever opinion of the law citizens may hold, there can be but one opinion as to the

Mayor's obligations to enforce all laws, not as he would have them, but as they exist.

TO THE PEOPLE OF NEW YORK.

MAYOR'S OFFICE,
New York, April 16, 1855,

The Legislature of this State having passed an act entitled "An Act for the Suppression of Intemperance, Pauperism and Crime," known as the Prohibitory Law, and as my position with reference to its enforcement in this city, so far as that duty may devolve upon my office, should be declared at an early day—to leave no doubt as to its character, I hereby present for public consideration the principles which control my conduct as a public officer, alike applicable to matters of great or small import.

That the people govern—not in their primary capacity, but through representatives freely and fairly chosen—is the theory of American government. The people are the source of political power. They make the laws; and the great safeguard of American liberty is general compliance. As the statutes thus created for the better protection of life and property and the pursuit of happiness, are but the reflection of the popular will for the time being, so are they binding upon the body politic—the minority as well as the majority—who are alike parties to the compact, the obligations of which it is dishonorable to disregard. And though these elements of self-government present the distinguishing features between our own and the governments of Europe, still our success has been owing more to acquiescence in the will of the majority than in the character of the government itself. Other republics have failed, even when formed upon our forms and constitution, only because of the resistance of the vanquished contestants for rule by rebellion against the laws and the executive power appointed to enforce them. We understand republicanism differently, and hence have no such struggles. The generally pervading common school educational system—the rigid principle of obedience instilled into the child by the parent, and into the scholar by the teacher—the enlarged human progress, leading onward to the expansion of the heart and intellect—all founded upon an enlightened, unprescriptive religious sentiment—furnish the platform upon which American liberty stands, and from which no calamity, save forcible resistance to the laws, can ever remove it.

It is not contended that minorities have not grievances, and that their

grievances must remain unredressed. Their rights are fully protected. The same fundamental law that binds minorities to submit, points out clearly the road to relief against an illegal or improper exercise of authority upon the part of the majority. Even whenever fanaticism rules the hour and covers the country with its baneful influence, to the exclusion of reason and justice, public opinion will soon correct the error and restore the calm sense of mature conservative judgment. What if the law-maker proves recreant and betrays the constituent he has chosen to represent? The wrong inflicted is not irremediable, though it may be a proper chastisement for a negligent or corrupt use of the franchise. Time repairs all the errors of legislation. Its evils and wrongs, however great, invariably recoil before public opinion and the decisions of the courts. Redress and relief can thus always be obtained. The legal tribunals and the ballot-box are never approached in vain for the maintenance of a good, or the overthrow of a bad cause. These are the only constitutional resorts—all others are treason and rebellion.

Another marked characteristic of the American people is the universal submission to the government forms restricting the powers and duties of the three components of government, viz: the legislative, the judical, and the executive. The first can only make the laws, the second can only expound them, and the third has no discretion but to see them faithfully executed. It is my province to act as agent for the people in one of these departments. I am an executive officer. I aid in the execution of the laws, and have sworn to do so "to the best of my ability." With no part or responsibility in their creation, so far as State legislation is concerned, I have no option but compliance as an instrument for their enforcement, and to require a compliance in others, as far as I have the ability. It is my duty to exact obedience, and yours to obey. The officer of the law is not accountable for the making of the law; he is bound to execute it pursuant to his oath of office though the responsibility of the people, as the source of all political power, cannot be so easily denied. As Mayor, I have endeavored to fulfil this duty. Though sometimes painful, yet it has been performed diligently and impartially. I hope to continue without relaxation. The act relating to the prohibition of the liquor traffic and consumption is now a law, holding the same position as any other law, and until decided invalid by the courts, or amended or repealed by the Legislature, should command the same obedience. So far as its execution depends upon me, I have no discretion but to exercise all my power to enforce it. It is unnecessary

for me to express an opinion in regard to legislation of this character, or of this law; not only because that opinion has been heretofore given, but because, whatever it may be, I cannot without dishonor shrink from a faithful discharge of the trust confided, whatever shall be the personal consequences to myself. I now call upon the friends of law and order to aid in the performance of this obligation, and in sustaining the laws—a principle upon which rests the corner stone of all our national prosperity and greatness.

Deeming my course with reference to this subject of interest to those whose occupations are to be affected, and especially to those whose licenses will expire with the year ending the first of May ensuing, I have felt it incumbent upon me to indicate it frankly. I have availed myself of the first moment, after the ajournment of the Legislature, when all expectations of repeal or modifications were hopeless, to thus make public my position, without having had time to examine it, or to receive counsel as to my duties under it, and without knowing whether I am called upon or have power as Mayor to take any part in its execution. I shall inform myself on these points without delay, and announce my conclusion to the public with the same candor that prompts this communication.

FERNANDO WOOD.

We close this work by presenting Mayor Wood's Report and Speeches in Congress, to which we have already alluded. We should be glad to examine the great national subjects which he has so ably discussed, but have only room to present the speeches as they are.

SPEECH OF MAYOR WOOD IN CONGRESS,

ON THE

FISCAL BANK OF THE UNITED STATES,

DELIVERED AUGUST 3D, 1841.

Mr. WOOD rose and said: Although not a talking man, either by profession or inclination, yet the importance of the question, and the recent signal expression of opinion from his constituents, demanded that he should be heard. He congratulated himself that he had obtained the floor at this early stage of the debate, and would not detain the committee by an exordium, but proceed directly in the discussion.

But, before entering upon the main question, he felt called upon to allude to one point in the argument of the gentleman (Mr. SERGEANT) from Pennsylvania, who opened the debate yesterday in an ingenious speech upon the constitutionality of a bank. He would not discuss the legal points with that gentleman; but he would say that that gentleman's remarks appeared to him as better fitted for the bar and a jury than for the House; and he would also add that it appeared rather as a speech made to remove from the Executive certain constitutional scruples he was supposed to entertain as to the powers of the Government to create a bank, than to convince Congress or the people. But with this he had nothing to do; it was the allusion made to the sentiments of a gentleman now minister to Russia (Mr. CAMBRELENG) to which he particularly referred. The gentleman, in the course of his remarks, alluded to a resolution reported to this House by Mr. Cambreleng from the Committee of Ways and Means in 1837—"that it was inexpedient to charter a national bank;" and drew from it the inference that that gentleman, the Committee of Ways and Means, and the House which passed the resolution, had no doubt as to the constitutionality of a national bank.

I protest (said Mr. W.) against this induction. It is not justified by the fact. It is not a logical inference. The speeches of my distinguished friend stand recorded against a bank, upon the ground of want of power under the constitution, as well as inexpediency. The gentleman from Pennsylvania was a member when these speeches were made; and it was unfortunate their character had escaped his recollection. Besides,

was this not so, he (Mr. C.) may have been acting under instruction from his committee, against his own vote. But, even if that was not the fact, he (Mr. W.) contended that the proposition of the inexpediency of a measure was not an admission of its legality. But, sir, (said Mr. W.,) I will not dwell here. My object is answered in thus briefly placing the opinion of an absent gentleman in its true light, and preventing what I conceive to be an unwarranted, and, I must add, unintentional stigma, falling upon the political character of one of the favorite sons of the Empire State.

The bill before the committee is, in common parlance, a bill to create a national bank as a fiscal agent of the Government—a proposition which presupposes the repeal of the law of July, 1840, for the safekeeping and disbursement of the public money, known as the independent treasury. Though the question of this repeal was not now directly before the committee, yet, understanding it to be the determination of the administration majority to move the "previous question" immediately upon that repeal, without allowing the minority an hour for discussion, he would take this opportunity of protesting against such tyranny and against the repeal.

A proposition to strike from the statute-book a law so important in its bearings, and created for purposes of such deep interest, should be accompanied by reasons more cogent than any we have yet heard. Proof should be adduced that it had failed to perform what its friends promised for it; that it had been mischievous in its effects, or impracticable in its operations. They are not produced; nor can it be said any argument based upon its action, worthy of serious notice, has been brought against it. It is safe, then, to hazard the opinion that no fault can be found with it in practice, although it had such strenuous opponents in theory. It has worked well, answering thus far (save probably, in a few minor details) the objects of its creation. If we revert to the oft-repeated prophecies of the whig party, of the devastation which the independent treasury was to spread with magic speed throughout the land, and now compare them with what has been our condition since its adoption, and with what is at this time our true condition, the falsity of the prophecies will be apparent. If the state of the times is used as an argument against it, it is its triumphant vindication, when compared with those which preceded it. We were told it was pregnant with lamentable consequences; that it would destroy commerce and confidence; reduce wages to ten cents per diem, the profits of agriculture to almost

nothing ;—in short, that all interests were to be annihilated. Has this been so ? Have any of these evils overtaken the people ? I opine not. Without producing statistics, as I here could, to show, by irrefutable data, that prosperity—true, not false prosperity—has existed with all classes ;—modified, it is true, but yet has existed since July, 1840, the period at which this bill became a law—I will content myself by referring alone to the mercantile portion of my constituency, boldly making the assertion that they have less cause of complaint this year than for either of the three previous. It is true, unfortunate bankrupts, borne to the earth by indebtedness, have not been relieved, nor can any law having for its object the custody of the public money relieve them ; nor has it reproduced the days of adventurous hazard, bringing back to the speculator dreams of glory. These its tendency has been to check, not facilitate. But mercantile New York, in her true business character—divested of, and divided from political prejudices—those freed from former embarrassments, and content with the profits of a safe, legitimate trade—comes not to your halls for legislative relief, or the repeal of this law ; short credits and small profits seldom trouble you with lamentations ; they have no cause for lamentations—they do not understand what is meant by "a war upon the currency." You cannot make the merchants, who follow these simple rules, believe they are ruined and prostrate bankrupts, although they may be deluded into a support of your administration. In discussing this point, it is necessary, Mr. Chairman, to discriminate between business merchants and political merchants ; for there is much necessity of such discrimination, when the advocates of the repeal and the establishment of a bank so strenuously urge their views upon the ground that they are demanded by the commercial interests of the country. Sir, I am proud of the intelligence, probity, and standing of this class of my constituency ; but, at the same time, it is my duty to say (and it is said with regret) that a large portion of it have allowed themselves to become the tools and instruments of designing politicians ; been drawn into the arena as partisan gladiators, lending the potential influence of their business titles to further schemes of adventurers ; allowing their interests, and consequently the vast interests depending upon them, to be almost prostrated by a mistaken enthusiasm, engendered by imaginary wrongs. They have been put into requisition upon this occasion ; but I must be allowed to say, they arrogate powers not belonging to themselves ; they cannot, in justice, speak for the commercial class of New York, but more properly for the political part of that class.

I repeat, that our trading community—the safe, sound, and rational portion of it, freed from these prejudices—make no complaint. The existing troubles they attribute to past errors. In short, no argument can be adduced in favor of the repeal of the independent treasury, based upon the action or effect of the bill. The state of the times since its adoption, as compared with the three preceding years, is upon its side—evidence of some weight, and should, in this discussion, be properly placed to its credit.

But I apprehend gentlemen do not urge the repeal for the reason that it has as yet betrayed any mischievous tendencies. We are told time sufficient has not yet elapsed, but the evil *will be* developed notwithstanding. Is it not wise, then, to await that time, and thus be furnished with reasons for the people? Hasty legislation, either in the enactment of laws or their repeal, is objectionable, and often pregnant with lamentable consequences. To guard against it, the framers of the constitution devised many ways. It was a point upon which they debated long and solemnly. To repeal this law at a time when it is indisputable, no argument can be produced against its operation—that it furnishes in practice none of the objections urged against it in theory—but merely because its enemies have obtained a momentary ascendency in our councils, is one of the very acts of hasty legislation so much dreaded by the founders of the Government; as, also, is it one of those self-destroying evils depicted by the opponents of republican institutions, as always connected with popular representative governments.

Much good was promised for it by its friends; much bad prognosticated by the opposition. The time necessary to prove who were in the right, and give it a fair trial upon its merits, has not elapsed. But if you force a decision, demanding a verdict now, the issue must be made up, upon its action, effect and influence; upon which ground we are ready to meet you, sanguine of a certain triumph.

But we are told the people have decided against it. Have they, forsooth? I respectfully ask, in what way? at what time? I am referred to the late Presidential election, but deny that that election had any reference to the independent treasury bill. The issue then, if there was any, (and if there was, for my life I could not discover it,) was of another kind—made up of different material than anything having a bearing upon any question of national interest, much less the question of—in what way the public revenue should be collected and disbursed. When was the subject discussed before the people? Where was a denunciation

of the odious sub-treasury made the war-cry for the onslaught, as in 1838? Nowhere! Or, if so, in isolated instances by itinerant whig orators, who, having learned their lessons in 1838, like other *starlings* having the faculty of repetition instead of invention, doled forth their lamentations in the old repeated strains of "sub-treasury! sub-treasury!! odious sub-treasury!!!"

Was it made the issue by that illustrious convention of office-seekers who nominated the successful candidate at Harrisburg? It was not. That august body of patriots, after contemplating their act, sneaked to their homes, not daring to make an avowal of sentiments. Or was it made the topic of discussion by the candidate himself (supposed, of course, to embody the principles of his party) in his various addresses to the people? It was not. That respectable old gentleman, as far as I know, never descanted upon the subject; or, if so, by the most indirect allusion. Suffice it to say, there was no issue made at that election, involving the repeal of this law; and gentlemen know it. That battle had been fought in 1838. The election for the 26th Congress turned almost entirely upon it. Mr. Van Buren proposed it in his first message in September, 1837, and it at once became the watchword of the democratic party, as it did the exclusive point of attack, of the federal party. The bank patriots left our ranks, in which there was no more prospect of plunder, suddenly dropping the reins which they had held with an iron grasp; thus causing dissension and confusion, producing the overwhelming though transient defeats of the fall of that year. The following spring State elections, contested upon the same ground, showed a slight re-action; but the canvass for the 26th Congress, in the fall and following summer, fought upon the broad platform of Jeffersonian democracy—the divorce of bank and state against a national bank—sub-treasury, or no sub-treasury—between the unpurified and unterrified democracy upon one side, and an unholy alliance of old federalists and bank-rag aristocracy upon the other;—an election, it may be said, held with express reference to this point of Mr. Van Buren's policy—resulted in a glorious triumph, by returning a majority in its favor, although the city of New York was defrauded, by pipe-laying, out of her representatives. Here was the issue—the only one ever made involving this question; and it is a vain subterfuge to transfer it to the late election, because you were fortunate enough to secure—no matter how—a majority of numbers against it.

As one knowing something of commerce and the influences affecting

it, and being somewhat conversant with the views of that interest, and representing, in part, the most important commercial district in the Union, I regret this motion, apart from all political considerations; I regret the subject is even agitated. The debate upon it is deleterious. If it is true (as so often contended by the opponents of the late and previous administrations) that this ever tinkering with the currency—this eternal legislation upon the public finances—has a fatal influence upon trade and commerce, why do the same gentlemen now follow the course they so eloquently denounced then?—violate a principle so soon after establishing it? The first session of the late Congress, as was thought, disposed of this matter. We had had a seven year's war between two powerful parties, contending with unexampled energy which should settle it according to its policy; until at last, by the passage of this bill, the question was set at rest—the public money was placed in a situation where politicians and speculators could not reach it—where it could no longer be used as investments for political defense or attack. The people, not party hacks, rejoiced at its final disposition; they felt that they were to remain for a season freed from the surges of this ocean; to have rest, peace, and security; the question was considered settled. Those who were sufferers through this conflict (and I know none who were not) would leave it where it is. Reasonable men, of all classes, rejoiced privately, if not publicly, at its conclusion. They felt relieved from the glorious uncertainty of a deranged currency. They now know upon what to depend; it was finished—disposed of; and although not according to the preference of some, yet it was disposed of; and prayed it might so remain. I tell you, sir, a majority of your party do not go with you in this repeal, when in its stead you seek to rear an institution like this proposed. The larger and more intelligent part of our merchants: a class who have contributed in various ways to place you in power, and who, according to panic makers, were to become its immediate victims—do not ask you for its repeal, if they are to have a bank in its place. The merchants throughout the country wish you to let them alone—to let the currency alone. Instead of calling extra sessions of Congress to cater for their especial benefit, they would rather Congress take a recess of five years, and give them relief by *non-interference*. You taught them that legislation upon the currency was prejudicial; they will ask you to practise upon, in majority, the doctrines so ably expounded in minority. They do not require the political theorists who aspire to the honor of constructing a system of finance, based upon some visionary abstraction

of their own, to practise castle-building at their expense; nor do they ask the adherents of whig candidates for the Presidency to prove their fealty by the constitution of a party engine—good for Presidential aspirants, but destructive to trade and commerce.

If the sub-treasury contains errors of detail, amend and alter, regulate, but not destroy. An error of detail is not an error of principle. Give our system the same chance of developing itself that we have given a bank, and if it prove to possess any of its fatal influence, I pledge myself the democratic party will go with you for its repeal. We never sought to wrest from the United States Bank its charter, even after its corruption had become manifest. In fact, at a time when it was notoriously subsidizing the press and squandering its money in a war upon General Jackson's administration, we never attempted the annulling of its charter. It had for years previous to its expiration proved unsafe as a public depository, unsound as a bank of emission, and a deranger instead of a regulator of the exchanges; yet we never dreamed, in the plenitude of our power, of laying hands upon it. I contend that the charter of that bank was violated, and yet General Jackson never proposed its demolition. It was at one time spoken of, in the political circles opposed to it; but the friends of the institution cried for quarter, and quarter was given. And so with our nine hundred State banks, which have been for years praying upon the vitals of the people, putting at defiance all law, human and divine. We have not sought their destruction, nor do we now; their friends admit there are errors in their system, but ask us to regulate, not destroy them. We make no admissions of errors in our system; but if there are errors of detail, regulate, but not destroy. For forty years this Government has tried a national bank as its fiscal agent: what has been our financial condition for these forty years? We have been periodically visited by panics, revulsions, and distresses, inflations and reactions, astounding exposes of defalcations and forgeries, agricultural killing low prices, and mechanical and operative killing high prices—a see-saw between inflation and depression, aptly represented by Daddy Lambert times and Calvin Edson times. But, sir, have any of these delectable bank followers visited us since the adoption of our plan? They have not. I shall be answered, it has not been in existence long enough. Very well: it is admitted. Give it a trial of ten years—one quarter the period you have had for yours; and if it harasses and beggars the people in the same manner, we will give it up, and strike our colors.

The truth is, no argument based upon common sense can be adduced against the independent treasury. There are two motives actuating its opponents : the one, malice—the other, to rear in its place a political institution, which will enable them to comply with certain promises made previous to the late election. There is a class of the whig party not provided for by the distribution of the spoils ; the wheel does not revolve fast enough for them ; and another, who look for payment in a less laborious manner, by moneyed facilities. There is an interest also across the water, too powerful to be denied, and to whom, if report speaks true, the dominant party is somewhat indebted. But if these exist only in the imagination, I repeat, malice—deep unrelenting malice—has much to do with this repeal ; a motive the more unmanly and contemptible, as it is veiled under pretexts of what the public good requires. By deception was the power obtained to do this deed, and by deception is the deed perpetrated. As the pirate decoys the merchantman under a friendly flag until the sides of the victim are scaled and the deck is in his possession—so did the whig leaders decoy the people, until, having them fast bound and powerless, as far as their action here is concerned, they unfurl the red banner, bring forth the bloody instruments of torture, exhibit the portentous engine yclept a bank, and prepare the manacles and chains. But, thank God, here the simile fails ; for, unlike the victims of the corsair, they shall be freed from this subjugation, and deal a just retribution upon the actors in this treachery—ay, sir, reaching the pirate captain himself, whether enveloped in robes of senatorial dignity (Mr. Clay) or doffed in the *brown* habit of a puritan secretary, (Mr. Webster.) These dazzlingly-bedecked chieftains wear but the people's livery. Is it not enough that you should have purchased popular support by allying yourself to popular passions ; but must you now exercise your ill-gotten power, without dignity and without respect, by indulging this spirit of pitiful vindictiveness ? But what can be expected of an administration coming into existence as it did, and controlled by the men it is—men whose object was to obtain office, and. until they are stripped of this power, standing forth as naked of Government patronage as they are naked of principle ? There is no rest for an abused and deluded people.

Sir, I have not the ability or disposition to go into an elaborate defense of the sub-treasury, if any were required. It was the principal topic of discussion in every legislative body in the country, from the moment of its proposition to its passage. The ablest talent battled for it and against it ; the

public press teemed with it; scarcely a child but is conversant with the arguments upon either side. I will not spend the people's money, or weary the patience of the committee, by repeating them. The mandate has gone forth—"*it must be repealed.*" It may be said, with propriety, that any discussion in the premises, or any opposition, here or elsewhere, is folly—madness. *It must be repealed.* A distinguished Senator has said it; and, like Mandarins under a special edict of the Celestial Emperor, it is the duty of the majority of this House to "*tremble and obey.*" But as it is not pretended we are to be left at sea without a rudder, a substitute is proposed; or, rather, would it not be more correct to say several substitutes? all, however, in the language of the official gazzette, "central or fiscal agents." The time has arrived when the lead-horses of this motley group, now in the possession of the Government, can, as they think with safety, take their course, without fear of the consequences. It is not now with the Kentucky Senator, as it was when pressed upon by the democratic Senator of New York, previous to the closing of the last Congress. Then, he replied to a question as to the substitute, "that sufficient for the day was the evil thereof." "He had then nothing but the sub-treasury to handle, and that was sufficient for him." It was too soon to play trumps. He (Mr. Clay) was not ready. A premature disclosure may have effected certain congressional elections, not at that time holden. Of course, at *that time* he had nothing but the sub-treasury to handle; it was entirely too soon to make further "disclosures for the public eye." But now, secresy was no longer necessary; the elections have been held; a federal majority is secured; the administration is thrust into the breach; the hand is shown; the card is played; and the whig trump is to "incorporate the subscribers to the Fiscal Bank of the United States."

Sir, if the people of this country decided in the late election against the sub-treasury, (which I deny,) did they decide in favor of a national bank? They did not. That issue was never made; the question was never raised; nor are they now in favor of such an institution. I am aware efforts are being made to foist upon Congress the interested action of a handful of brokers, bankers and speculators, as the popular voice. But the mantle of deception is too flimsy. Gentlemen refer me to what they are pleased to term the mammoth petition from New York, presented to the Senate a few weeks since. Sir, they may term it the mammoth petition, but I christen it the bastard petition; ay, sir, the illegitimate offspring of illegitimate parents. Sir, it purports to have been signed by some fifteen or twenty thousand petitioners; whereas, if my information be

correct, it did not contain eleven thousand; and four thousand of them were purchased by hired loafers at the corners of streets, at four dollars per hundred. Thus will the mammoth, which took three persons to bring to the capitol, lose more than half of its rotundity, and all of anything formidable in its appearance. I have alluded to the three persons who assumed the responsibility of acting as its guards and escorts; I should have said *committee*, for they were dignified by such official cognomen by their wire-pullers in Wall street. And who were the members of this committee? The same gentlemen who went "cap in hand" to Mr. Biddle, in March, 1837, begging him to save New York from annihilation; and who, in October, 1839, advocated a suspension of specie-payments by our banks—fit instruments to be the tenders of such a petition. There has also been presented a memorial from the Chamber of Commerce of New York, praying for a similar favor. I have a word to say as to this memorial. Unsophisticated gentlemen, unacquainted with the way in which *cliques* contrive to manufacture public sentiment, would not think it possible that a memorial coming from such a source could be any other than a representation of the opinion of commercial men; but, sir, in this instance it is not so. Our Chamber of Commerce is an association of about two hundred gentlemen: there were but fifty-six present, when a resolution was passed to memorialize Congress for a bank: thirty-six voted in favor, and twenty against it. Under this resolution, a committee of five was appointed to draw a memorial—and were they merchants? No, sir, there was but one merchant upon that committee. This is not an empty assertion, without authority; but is the fact, as I will convince the House, by producing their names and occupation. The first-named gentleman was James G. King, senior partner of the house of Prime, Ward, & King, an old-established Wall street *banking-house*, largely connected with British capitalists and British interests—a banker, (or, in common parlance, a *broker*,) and not a merchant. I intend no disrespect when I characterize him as a broker. This word, in its original and true definition, has nothing disreputable in it; its present taint has arisin from the fleecing propensities of the modern order of that profession. Among them are many honorable exceptions, and I believe him (Mr. K.) to be one; but he is not a merchant, and, consequently, is not the proper person to speak through the Chamber of Commerce what the mercantile interests of New York require. The next is Mr. James Brown, of the house of Brown, Brothers & Co., another *banking* establishment, largely connected with capital-

ists across the Atlantic, and, as I believe, a partner in a similar firm in Liverpool or London. As a representative of the commercial classes, he is in the same category with the former gentleman. I intend no disrespect. Well, sir, the third is Mr. James Depeyster Ogden—not a banker, it is true, but a cotton operator—or, in other words, a cotton speculator. This gentleman (whom I understand to be a very worthy man) is the author of several labored treatises in favor of a bank, and is the reputed author of the memorial. He is not a merchant, and cannot speak for the merchants of New York. The fourth is Mr. John R. Hurd, president of an insurance company, who is also a gentleman of respectability, but not a merchant; nor can he with propriety speak for the merchants of New York. The fifth, and last, is Mr. William H. Aspinwall, a *bona fide* merchant, practically and theoretically, and one of the most enlightened and prosperous of the class. He was the only merchant upon the committee. In connection with this point, I will add, that at the time this cheat was in preparation—this merchants' petition being drawn up by brokers and speculators for the Congressional market — there were conspicuous British bankers in Wall street, anxious observers, if not co-laborers in the movement. Among them might be named Mr. Bates, partner of the celebrated house of Baring, Brothers & Co.; Mr. Cryder, of the equally celebrated house of Morrison, Cryder & Co; Mr. Palmer, jr., son of Horsley Palmer, now (or late) *Governor of the Bank of England.* Nor, Mr. Chairman, were these "allies" seen alone in Wall street; their visits were extended to the Capitol; and since the commencement of the debate upon this bill in the other House, they have been in the lobbies, attentive and apparently interested listeners. I make no comment: comment is unnecessary. I state facts—undeniable facts; and it is with feelings akin to humiliation and shame that I stand up here and state them.

Sir, the voice from the city of New York in favor of the national bank is from Wall street and its purlieus; from the brokers, bankers, speculators, and their dependants, and not from the solvent and prudent merchants, or the small traders and mechanics. The merchants of New York, in the aggregate, without reference to party, are opposed to any bank you can create, under any name, with any checks of any character. But, sir, I repeat: suppose the people have decided against the subtreasury, (which I deny;) and suppose they decide in favor of a national bank, (which I deny;) and suppose the people are now in favor of it, (which I deny;)—will it perform what its friends in Congress promise

for it? It will not. We are told, among other benefits to be conferred by its creation, a uniform currency will be established, and exchanges will be regulated. Gentlemen often revert to the late bank as proof of this assertion. I will take them on that issue, and leave out of the question, as they unfairly do, the Pennsylvania Bank of the United States.

It is an error, an unpardonable error, in either practical men or statesmen, to say that the late United States Bank produced steadiness of currency, or regular exchanges. In the first commencement, it so inflated the money-market that a revulsion soon followed, which swept off the merchants of the day by thousands. The father of the humble individual who addresses you (said Mr. W.) was one of the unfortunate victims. This revulsion nearly prostrated the bank; but, by breaking everything else, it saved itself. Its safety was secured by its management falling into the hands of Mr. Cheves, who took the reins, and saved it from bankruptcy and ruin. An able and impartial writer, who avows himself in favor of a bank, says, in speaking of the close of Mr. Cheves's administration:

"The bank then passed into other hands, and from that time to 1836 there were no causes developed which threatened a general suspension of the State institutions; but there were various important minor *crises* which were *all* more or less *aggravated* by the action of the Bank of the United States; and with the causes in operation from 1830 to 1836, (independent of those arising from the war between the Government and the bank,) *had its charter been renewed, it would inevitably have failed.* These causes are well known: they were chiefly in a series of years of high prices for cotton, of introduction of foreign credit and capital into the foreign trade of the country, the gradual increase of loans to the States, and the stopping of payments on account of the national debt. The operation of these causes brought in a gradual and continual accession of capital, and enlarged the basis of credit and confidence in that degree that engagements were infinitely multiplied and business expanded, and together with the immense increase of Government deposits in the bank, make it all but certain that, under its then management and great and increasing circulation and extension, it would have been the first to fail and carry the country with it; and we believe the time is not far distant when this will be considered beyond question. It behooves us, therefore, if we *are* to have another bank, to have it so restricted and constructed as to place it out of the power of enterprise or cupidity to endanger its safety, and to lessen the mischief which *always* accompanies the action of such large bodies in times of difficulty."

Again: another able writer on finance gives a statement which cannot be controverted. I challenge contradiction here or elsewhere.

The fact that, for a few years during the existence of the United States Bank, the exchanges were uniform, proves nothing but that a combination of extraordinary events tended to produce a greater supply of credit than could for some years be absorded in the regular course of business. These were created partly by the yearly payments of $10,000,000 on account of the national debt, which went through the United States Bank as the fiscal agent, and the creation of a large amount of State debts that formed the basis of bills. From the creation of the United States Bank in 1817, up to 1823, the exchanges were in as bad a condition as they are at this moment. The banks of the south and southwest

did not pay specie, and the United States Bank had no power over them. In 1820, large issues of State stocks commenced, as follows:

State stocks issued from 1821 *to* 1830.

Issue commenced–1820	South Carolina	-	$1,560,000
1823	Pennsylvania	-	7,980,000
1823	Virginia	-	1,499,000
1823	Alabama	-	100,000
1824	New York	-	8,496,781
1824	Louisiana	-	1,800,000
1825	Ohio	-	4,400,000
	Total,	-	25,835,781

In this we find that nearly every section of the Union had large credits to draw against, created by stock sales. In these stocks were invested a large amount of the money paid out through the United States Bank to the public creditors. This was an important element in regulating the exchanges; and as during that period the movements of the bank were confined to regular business only, there was but little speculation abroad; and these credits were all to be absorbed in regular business. A sufficiency of bills was thus created that effectually prevented any extraordinary rise in rates. Let us now see the movements of the bank during the whole existence, as follows:

Bank of the United States from its organization up to January, 1841.

Year.	Loans.	Stocks held.	Specie.	Circulation.	Deposits.
Jan., 1817	$3,485,195	$4,829,234	$1,724,109	$1,911,200	$11,233,021
1818	41,181,750	9,475,932	2,515,949	8,339,448	12,279,207
1819	35,786,263	7,391,823	2,666,696	6,563,750	5,792,809
1820	31,401,158	7,192,980	3,392,755	3,589,481	6,568,794
1821	30,995,199	9,155,855	7,643,140	4,567,053	7,984,985
1822	28,061,169	13,318,951	4,761,299	5,578,782	8,075,152
1823	30,736,432	11,018,552	4,424,874	4,361,058	7,622,340
1824	33,432,084	10,874,914	5,813,694	4,647,071	13,701,936
1825	31,812,617	18,422,027	6,746,952	6,068,394	12,033,364
1826	33,424,621	18,303,501	3,960,158	9,474,987	11,214,640
1827	30,938,836	17,764,359	6,457,161	8,549,409	14,320,186
1828	33,682,905	17,624,859	6,170,045	9,855,677	14,497,330
1829	39,219,602	16,099,099	6,098,138	11,901,656	17,461,918
1830	40,663,805	11,610,290	7,608,076	12,924,145	16,045,782
1831	44,022,057	8,674,681	10,808,040	16,251,267	17,297,041
1832	66,293,707	2,200	7,038,023	21,355,724	22,761,434
1833	61,695,913	–	8,951,847	17,518,217	20,347,749
1834	54,911,461	–	10,031,257	19,208,379	10,828,550
1835	51,808,739	–	15,708,369	17,339,797	11,756,905
1836	59,232,445	–	3,417,988	23,075,422	5,061,456
1837	57,393,709	–	2,638,449	11,477,968	2,332,409
1838	45,258,571	14,862,108	3,770,842	6,768,067	2,616,713
1839	41,618,637	17,957,497	4,153,607	5,982,621	6,779,394
1840	36,839,593	16,316,419	1,469,674	6,695,861	3,328,521
1841	20,942,508	10,822,717	2,569,705	7,157,517	2,970,069
April, 1841	19,349,079	10,913,240	756,454	3,294,576	1,462,239

We find here that, from 1819 to the election of General Jackson in 1828, the discounts of the bank varied but little, and never ran so high as its capital. In 1828 it increased its loans $6,000,000, and in each successive year up to 1832, there was a large increase of loans and a decrease in stocks. For a period of five years there is no return made of stock, but in that time large loans were made on stocks. In March, 1835, these loans were $4,797,936; and in March, 1836, they were $20,000,000. In March, 1835, the loans by the exchange committee commenced, and ran from $6,000,000 to $8,000,000 in two years. In all this period speculation ran very high. The State loans created from 1830 to 1835 were as follows:

State stock created from 1830 *to* 1835.

Louisiana	$7,335,000	Mississippi	$2,000,000
Alabama	2,200,000	Tennessee	500,000
Indiana	1,890,000	Illinois	600,000
Ohio	1,701,000	Virginia	686,000
Maryland	4,210,311	Maine	554,976
Pennsylvania	16,130,003	New York	2,204,979
Total			$40,012,769

United States Bank bills were paid out on those stocks to a great extent, and they thereby got an immense circulation, which ranged near $23,000,000 in 1836. The credits created thereby went far to support the exchanges. In 1832 the immense fund that had yearly been thrown off by the payments on the public debt ceased by an extinguishment. In 1833 the deposits were removed, and the bank proceeded to curtail the loans on mercantile paper; and as it did so, employed its funds on stock loans. Hence the discounts in 1835 had decreased $15,000,000, and the stock loans, according to the late committee report, were $20,000,000, while the specie had accumulated to $15,000,000. In 1838, according to the table, there was a further reduction of $14,000,000 in discounts, and an increase of $15,000,000 in the stock account. In the following year the same feature was apparent. The whole contraction of loans from 1833 to the present time is $49,000,000, which of course was good. The remaining $19,000,000 is the refuse; and when we take into consideration the circumstances of its creation, it may be put down as worthless. The late report states that "very little of it is mercantile paper." The details of these bills would be very interesting.

From 1835 to 1838 the creation of State stock amounted to $103,423,808, almost all the States participating. Under the inflation of the bank, the fictitious business had become so great as to absorb all the bills based upon these credits. The banks stopped, their paper became depreciated, and the exchanges fell into confusion.

Although the bank called in its loans on regular paper after 1833, it reloaned the money on stocks. The officers speculated with it in all kinds of ways, and when, in 1836, the charter was to be paid for, the bank was obliged to borrow $5,000,000 in London, and 12,500,000 francs in France. The creation of stock gave to each section an excess of credit on the financial centre of the Union, *that of itself regulated exchanges, and would have done so in the hands of private dealers, without a national bank;* and exchanges would have worked as regularly as they do throughout Europe without any bank.

Now, sir, let us hear no more of the beneficent operation of the old bank. It is dead, but its disasterous consequences still live.

We need not a Government bank to regulate exchanges; they are regulated by the immutable laws of nature—by supply and demand.

Artificial remedies for currency disorders are like artificial stimulants to the prostrate animal—the resuscitation, to be permanent and healthful, must be produced by the inherent vigor of the system, which depends upon the inherent vitality of itself. What is exchange? It is simply the transfer of property or its representative. If banks confine their business to the legitimate objects of their creation—making loans upon short bona-fide business paper, and no other—exchanges cannot be deranged, because then the notes discounted represent commodity; capital is loaned, and not credit—which, as all writers on commercial banking agree, is the only thing a bank should loan. We require nothing to regulate exchanges, if our nine hundred banks do their duty; but if they will only in part perform it—one portion of the country suspending, and the other paying specie—the exchanges will become disturbed, and human ingenuity cannot devise a national bank to remedy the difficulty.

But, sir, granting that every merit you claim for a national bank was well founded, and that it would perform allt he beneficent action promised, it cannot be put into successful operation, nor can it ever obtain public confidence. The people of our country have had a surfeit of their banking system. Of all the evils of corrupt legislation, the creation of banks, whether State or national, has been the worst. I think the assertion can be established, that nearly, if not all the periodical derangement in our monetary affairs has had its origin in it. Banks appear to be the instruments selected by man to subvert God's blessings. Look abroad upon the face of our beautiful country; see its expanse of empire, stretching almost from the rising to the setting of the sun; its climate of every variety—the soft zephyrs of the south, and stern frigidity of the north; its soil sending forth spontaneously, almost without the force of man's labor, the richest products of earth's bosom; its bounteous supply of rivers for navigation, and watering streams for tillage; its mighty oak, for the construction of the world's commerce, and the skill and energy for its speedy monoply. And were these not given—had God not lavished upon us these gifts—look at the governmental fabric bequeathed to us by "the sires of whom we are the degenerate posterity!" See its adaptation to our physical and mental being; its invisible operation upon our cohesion and fraternity. Again: see the resources of our strong arms, native intellects, and indomitable enterprise, raising us aloft in all the attributes of gifted man; but, alas! turned upon ourselves, the weapons of our own destruction—the engines by which we perpetrate a suicide upon our own prosperity. It is ourselves,

then, and not God, who produce, by the creation of credit, and not capital, the evils of which we complain. The munificent Bestower of all blessings has allotted to our portion of his domain, fair verdure, congenial climate, and individual adaptation of character; but by our own hands have we fallen victims to the abuse of what was intended as blessings, sacrificed by legislation, destroyed by turning our back upon the benevolence of God, looking to banks and not industry.

Sir, do you know what banks have cost the people? I will show you.

In a report made to this House by the Committee of Ways and Means in 1830. it was estimated that, previous to 1817, the Government lost by loans made to it in depreciated currency, and paid in specie - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - $33,000,000

The late Secretary of the Treasury, in a report to the Senate, tells us that, since then, the Government has lost - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 15,492,000

That the people have lost directly by bank failures - 108,885,721

Losses by suspensions of specie payments by banks, and consequent depreciation on their notes - - - - 95,000,000

Losses by destruction of bank-notes by accidents - - 7,121,332

Losses by counterfeit bank-notes, beyond losses by coin - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 4,444,444

Losses by fluctuations in bank currency affecting prices, extravagance in living, sacrifices of property, and by only a part of the other incidents to the banking system, not computed above, at least - - - - - - 150,000,000

413,943,497

But, sir, we do not stop here. This is an enormous aggregate, but this is not all. The losses by fictitious banks and their notes—operations of mere swindling—are very considerable; and they are justly chargeable to our system of paper currency. Besides, there are frauds, robberies, and defalcations, connected with the banks, which might be properly set down under this head; but these are not easy to compute.

The amount paid by the country to the banks, during the last ten years, for the use of their agency and their notes, after deducting six per cent. interest for the use of bank capital and the reasonable expenses of managing the banks, is computed at - - - - - - $94,000,000

Being an annual sum of - - - - - - - - - - - - 9,400,000

Of the aggregate losses sustained by the community since 1789, Mr. Woodbury computes that there must have happened within the last ten years an amount of - - - - - - - - - - - - - - $200,000,000
Which is at the annual rate of - - - - - - - - - 20,000,000

Is not this a frightful exhibit of what banks have cost the people? But it is not all. Where is the gatherer of statistics who will attempt to compute the losses sustained by men who, seduced from the small earnings of an honest avocation, have been ensnared into the temptation of a bank discount? What master hand shall delineate the wreck of morals and loss of character, to say nothing of domestic happiness, produced thereby? Who will furnish us a record of the defalcations, forgeries, dishonest self-appropriations, with which our press is almost daily teeming? Sir, these are evils of the system. The wisdom of this, or any other country, never created banks, as such, without these concomitants. These evils appear to be a necessary consequence—a certain result. Is it not strange, then, we find in this House advocates for a bank as an agent of the Government—as a keeper of the public finances—men willing to strike from existence a law with which they have not, and cannot, justly find fault; and place in its stead one, the result of which all experience proves is pregnant with the worst of evils—the very impersonation of national disaster?

But, sir, in conclusion, let me say, Go on—pass this bill—charter your bank—fasten this iniquity upon the country; the mighty shout of *repeal* has gone forth from my lion-hearted constituency. Ay! repeal! repeal!! repeal!!! From that ground from whence first floated to the winds the bright banner of "*Divorce* of *Bank* and *State*"—borne aloft by the stout arms and honest hearts of the down-trodden but indignant masses—now is heard, trumpet-tongued, the voice of REPEAL. New York has spoken—she never speaks in vain. I echo her voice in these halls. It is the proudest moment of my life that I have been the first in this debate to ring into the ears of great men's satellites—"Bind the chains of this bank upon us, and the Democracy will rend them asunder by a speedy repeal of its charter."

SPEECH OF MAYOR WOOD IN CONGRESS,

ON THE

OPERATION OF THE TARIFF LAWS.

DELIVERED FEB. 9, 1842.

Mr. SALTONSTALL, from the Committee on Manufactures, reported the following resolution :—

Resolved, That the Committee on Manufactures be authorized to send for witnesses and take testimony on the subject of the present tariff laws, their operation upon the interests of the country, and the alterations which those interests require :

Which being under consideration,

Mr. WOOD rose, and addressed the House, in substance as follows :

Mr. SPEAKER : I am in favor of all information which it is possible to gather upon this important question, and desire, as earnestly as any gentleman, that every legal and just means be taken to procure it. I am willing to go far, very far, to obtain light, for none more than myself believes it is required. Of all questions affecting individual and Government interests, directly or indirectly, that is paramount ; therefore light should be had, that we may legislate knowingly and understandingly. This House, of all the world, requires it. The discussion of the revenue bill of last session and motion of reference of the tariff portion of the President's message this session, have convinced me we have too little of the requisite knowledge. We are lamentably ignorant of the practical operation of our import system, or in what respect it needs modification or alteration. The country is in want of light. The manufacturing districts should have the light of reason and experience, to show them the fallacy of submitting their interests to the control and jurisdiction of demagogues. And from whence must it come ? From practical men ; of all classes, professions and occupations. The dreamy theorist of the old world, or one-sided, interested advocates of this, cannot, if they would, impart it to us. It must be drawn from a philosophic study and comparison of facts, and not from inventive political economists. We must go into an investigation as expansive and deep as will be the bearing of our decision upon the interests of the people and prosperity of the Government. All men must give us the result of their experience. In disposing of a question which involves every interest—the ramifica-

tions of which extend to every man, woman and child in the nation—which is inseparably connected with and controls the public Treasury, a precise and positive knowledge is unquestionably indispensable.

There must be no surmises; no guessing, no speculation. Facts, indisputable and beyond impeachment, must be the basis of our action. I would examine the merchant. I would ask him how and in what manner a high tariff affects commerce; whether a tariff sufficiently high for protection is not inconsistent with a tariff for revenue; whether tariffs should be discriminating or an unvarying ad valorem; how the English warehousing system, and the proposed home valuation, would be adapted to this country, and what rate of duties would best prevent smuggling and other invasions of the revenue laws, and the other numerous inquiries of detail. I would ask the agriculturist under which system, high or low duties, the native products of the soil would find the most advantageous market; whether he was willing to pay an additional tax upon implements of husbandry, not to raise revenue by which to meet necessary national disbursements, but add to the already large profits of manufacturers; and whether a restrictive duty on foreign importations would not in time cut off much of the foreign demand for his own productions? The manufacturer should be consulted. I would ask him whether, without protection, under low duties, with a business ensuring a fair remuneration, his interest would be subserved by encouraging the competition and rivalry of speculating adventurers; if in those countries of Europe where the restrictive policy had been thrown off, the manufacturers had not surely flourished in proportion to advantages of material and labor; and if American manufacturers cannot subsist and flourish without the aid of Government, by what right does it demand a tax upon the whole industrial as well as non-producing population for its particular benefit. I would ask whether he was ready to admit that, with our free institutions, superior industry, ingenuity, and advantages of home-raised raw material, we could not compete with European monarchies. And I would now appeal to the consumer of all classes and occupations—to the backwoodsman of the Far West, and the sturdy operative of the Atlantic cities.

Of the hardy pioneer, whose capital is as much in the axe as the sinews which deal the blows, I would learn how he is affected! Whether he is willing the instruments with which he levels the mighty oak of the forest, and the weapons with which he drives its original owners from their coverts, may be taxed to build up and cherish Eastern monopolizing,

manufacturing corporations. Sir, in part, I have the honor to represent a large manufacturing district; for I contend that he who planes a board, or makes a shoe, or constructs any work of art or mechanism from prepared or raw material is as much a manufacturer as the denizens of your New England associations, and should be as much consulted. To the manufacturers, or, in another word, the mechanics of the city of New York, I would apply—I would ask them whether they desire that the doctrine of protection be put into practical operation, and that the fostering care of Government be exerted for their particular benefit, to the detriment of every other class, and destruction of our present means of raising revenue? Whether they are willing to carry out the principles of the Home League, by paying thirty dollars for a coat which previously had cost but twenty-five? I know them too well to do them the injustice not to anticipate their answer. *They* require no protection but the reward of honest industry. They come not to your halls for fostering care. If there is a favor they would ask or accept at your hands, it is *non-interference*—to let them alone—to cease your officious intermeddling, and, least of all, keep away the protection of a high tariff, which they look upon as

> "Such protection as vultures give to lambs—
> Covering and devouring them."

They will turn to you and say, "Gentlemen, last session you squandered the public treasure upon bankrupt, profligate States, giving away, in a corrupt bargain, that which cost our father's blood and treasure, and now come to us with the conciliatory notes of kindness, with a base bribe to buy our favor. We will none of it. We *question* that the policy of high duties is beneficial to us; but we *know*, if it were so, that it is iniquitous, anti-Democratic, and unequal. We have principles dearer to us than pecuniary advantage. We would not have you destroy the harmony of the glorious and beautiful Union, or do aught to impair the fabric of our political existence, to put in our pockets the wealth of the Indies. We are no dollar and cent patriots; they may be found in your marble palaces, but not in our obscure workshops. It is true we produce everything and get nothing, and you produce nothing and get everything; yet your injustice to us shall not compel us to be unjust to others." This would be their answer, as it would, if I mistake not, the answer of the same class throughout the Union.

Sir, I am in favor of getting, in this manner, the facts upon which to base our action, but object to the medium through which it is pro-

posed by this resolution to procure them. I am not willing to trust the Committee on Manufactures, as now organized, with the power of making those inquiries; better have no investigation, and depend upon the lights of our own experience, than be fatally misled. In searching for facts, let us beware of false facts. If we desire to enter the haven safely, let us take pilots whose interest or enmity will not drive us upon the beach. I cannot give my vote to entrust this responsible and important duty to the Committee on Manufactures.

It is no small part of our legislative rights that this resolution asks shall be given them. Under an ingenious construction of the Constitution, power can be found in it to do almost anything, in the name of the House of Representatives of the United States; it can command the attendance of witnesses, whether for real or pretended examination, and institute an inquisitorial scrutiny into accounts and papers. In many ways it can, if it will, encroach upon the rights and property of citizens. Nor is this all. Admitting no individual rights were violated; I ask if it is, as now composed, two-thirds of its members having prejudged, representing constituents loudly clamorous for protection; I ask, is it the proper committee to undertake this inquiry? It is truly and emphatically a committee for protection. Let us look into the districts of a majority of the members. The honorable chairman (Mr. SALTONSTALL) has, in the two counties which he is set down in the Congressional Directory as representing, 19,567 persons engaged in manufactures and trades.

[Here Mr. SALTONSTALL inquired of Mr. WOOD what portion of them were engaged in mechanics, and what portion in trading. He said his district was commercial, agricultural, and navigating, and that he premised the gentleman from New York (Mr. W.) was mistaken in his district.]

Mr. Speaker, for the counties composing the gentleman's district, I quote from the Congressional Directory, furnished to this House by its officers, and for the statistics from the sixth census, recently taken. I presume the authority is good—it has never before been questioned. The next member is the gentleman from Rhode Island, Mr. [TILLINGHAST] In the county of his residence, (Providence,) I find there are 14,302 persons engaged in manufactures and trades, although its whole industrial population, including all employments and professions, is but 24,645. The gentleman and one colleague represent the whole State, in which there are but five counties. So in truth he is the representative of, it is safe to estimate, in all, at least double that number. The next on the

committee is the gentleman from New Jersey, [Mr. RANDOLPH.]. Himself and five colleagues are elected by general ticket. He has no district. The whole State had 27,004 engaged in manufactures and trades, which, giving him one-sixth, make him the representative of over 4,500.

We come now, sir, to the distinguished advocate of high protection and Abolition, the gentleman of Vermont, (Mr. Slade.) He is set down as representing Rutland and Addison counties, which have, together, 2,232 of the same class. The fifth is my colleague from Rensselaer county, (Mr. Hunt,) who has 4,787 in his district. The sixth is the gentleman from Pennsylvania, (Mr. Henry,) who represents 2,612. There are but nine members on the committee. The branches of industry and principal business of the constituency of six of them, are here shown. They are gentlemen elected to this House by manufacturing districts, for the avowed purpose of procuring from Congress a high tariff for protection. They are fully committed to the advocacy of such a law. Had they not been, their seats would now have other occupants. They could not have been elected holding opinions adverse to the opinions of their people. Those opinions have been repeatedly expressed, accompanied by uncompromising demands of protection. I repeat, therefore, this is a committee of protection—for an ultra high tariff.

Now, sir, is this the proper medium through which to collect the necessary information to guide us to a fair, equal and wise disposition of the tariff question? It is not! A large majority of its members would go into the investigation, with interests and prejudices misleading their judgments and controlling their decisions. Local preferences would be consulted. The political power which created and can destroy, would have the preponderance. That comprehensive view of this widespread country, with its diversified and delicate interests, could not be taken. All classes and occupations would not alike be called upon for evidence; nor would the evidence collected receive dispassionate consideration. A report would be made to us and go forth to the country, with all the authority of a Congressional document, with false inductions from doubtful facts. Is the House prepared to give this power to the men who ask it?—to place in the custody of the representatives of one class the vital interest of all other classes. Will the people support us in it if we do? I think not. The gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. Tillinghast) tells us the power is safely entrusted, for we give it to honorable men. It may be so. I question no man's honor; but has the honorable gentleman forgotten that the most beautiful object in nature will appear

hideous if seen through a jaundiced vision? How often have men's passions made the brightest truth seem to them the foulest falsehood? Who does not remember the error, misery, and bloodshed, which have been perpetrated in the world by counsels that had prejudged? Or is the judicature of the holy inquisition forgotten, whose victims passed through the form and ceremonies of trial, before judges, who, out of their own evidences, adjudged the innocent to torture? But, that the application be more direct, who would willingly submit a cause at common law to the decision of a jury of opponents? or what member of this House would like his general veracity tested by the testimony of personal enemies?

The case is plain. The Committee on Manufactures are one-sided and partial. We must have an unbiassed investigation or none. We want light, not darkness; and, sir, it is not the evil which may be inflicted now, the erroneous opinions that may spring up in an honest community at this time, or the improper turn to be given to present legislation, that excites all my fears. I look to posterity. It is our duty to the "generations which come after us," not to hang out false lights. Legislators are wedded to precedents and the quotations of authorities. Hand not down to our children the record of their fathers prostituting everything to mammon. This report would become a portion of our parliamentary history, and go to the world and after ages as a statement of facts with warranted inference. It will gain force by time. Hereafter, when years may have obliterated the data by which to expose its fallacies, it will become, if not an absolute law, certainly a powerful weapon with which to perpetuate the evil now effected. These are important considerations.

But, Mr. Speaker, suppose the objections here urged against the present character of the committee cease to operate by changing its members. Let us imagine it freed from the charges I bring—in all things irreproachable and unimpeachable, without prejudice, interest, or passion. Is there time at this cession to perform the work? There is not. Witnesses are to be summoned from beyond the White Mountains in the East—from the Texian border in the South—the frozen regions of the North, and the forests and priaries of the West—American citizens, alike interested in our impost system of taxation, are to be drawn from their homes, separated by more than a thousand leagues. Innumerable questions of detail, as well as general principles, are to be asked practical merchants from different seaports. An almost incredible

amount of commercial intelligence is necessary to commence the basis of the proposed structure, and it can only come from the enlightened of those who have learned by experience. This is a wide field of investigation, demanding careful and exact inquiry. The manufacturers have much to impart; they have honest differences upon cardinal points, which should be entertained and reconciled; their several classes are to be consulted. The agriculturists would have mighty claims upon our attention: this noble art is cultivated in our country by near four million inhabitants, whose rapidly increasing prosperity begins to look for outlets in foreign markets. Of all the avocations of man, tilling the soil is most legitimate, and in accordance with his nature. It should be guaranteed the full earnings of his labor, and the imposition of indirect taxes be freed from unequal exactions.

Is it possible to thoroughly perform this duty in the most extended time allowable at this session? How long do the majority intend to keep us at the Capitol? Reference was made yesterday to the report of Mr. Hume to the British house of Commons. It is argued that that report had been the work of far less time than was necessary in our instance. I am glad the advocates of this resolution have alluded to that precedent. If they are so chained to the examples of British legislation, I wish them more judgment in their selections. For myself, I repudiate the policy of drawing upon English habits and English customs, whether social or political. I desire that some of these days we may become less dependent and menial. I know it is said, by the friends of Britain upon this side of the Atlantic—and she has many—that our interests are inseparable. I deny it. The true interest of America is to sever all connection with the worn-out and rotten monarchies of Europe—to be as independent in her pecuniary relations as she is gloriously independent in her political relations. As she rests upon no nation on earth to assist her in maintaining and carrying out the undying truths of Democracy, so should she rest on no nation on earth in assisting her in the simple walks of Republican legislation. We have the examples set us by the able and patriotic sires of their country. Our own few Congressional archives will furnish guides enough for the full deliberation of laws adapted to freemen. When we go back again to bondage, I will not complain of gentlemen who seek to adopt the rules of bondsmen to the abeyance of freed men. But Mr. Hume's report has been referred to. I accept the issue. What are the particulars of its history? On the 6th of May, 1840, by a resolution of the House of Commons, a select

committee was appointed, on motion of Mr. Hume, "to inquire into the several duties levied on imports into the United Kingdom, and how far those duties are for protection to similar articles, the product of manufacture of this (Great Britain) country, or of the British possessions abroad, or whether the duties are for the purposes of revenue alone; and to report the minutes of evidence taken, to the House." Upon this committee were nine of the most prominent and able members of the Commons, at the head of which was Mr. Hume, the author of the proposition.

I have no data of the day upon which it entered upon its duties, but suppose, as the session had far advanced, it commenced immediately. Twenty-nine witnesses were examined, each of whom was a resident of London; not a man was summond from beyond the precincts of the capitol. Those who gave testimony were at the door; but few practical men underwent examination, and in no instance was the investigation lengthy or full. Notwithstanding these favorable circumstances to a short and speedy termination, the sittings were continued until the 6th of August, precisely three months from the day of commencement. Nor were the committee satisfied they had accomplished the objects of their creation. We have the recorded minutes to show they were not. At the last meeting, when the report was formally decided upon, Sir C. Douglass, a member, offered the following amendment: "To strike out all after the first word of the report, and insert: 'the evidence, although partial and limited, is of so various and valuable a character, that your committee do not feel they should be justified in expressing any opinion founded on the expressions it is calculated to create. Your committee consider that further information ought to be afforded, before they can make *any recommendation* as the result of their labors, and consequently they do not hesitate to suggest the *reappointment of a committee*, early in the next session, to continue the investigation of this important subject.'" And in the report, as finally adopted and presented to the House, I find an admission that, "owing to the period of the session at which the inquiry was begun, the committee have not been able to embrace all the several branches which come within the scope of their instructions." If gentlemen can find encouragement here to vote a similar proposition under auspices as far adverse to the procuration of reliable results as can well be, then their confidence in miracles is much greater than my own. Mr. Hume's committee set three months, in which it examined twenty-nine witnesses, every man of whom was within an hour's call, and finally made an admitted *ex parte* report, without having

touched "several branches which come within the scope of their instructions." Now, sir, how long would it take our Committee on Manufactures, whose witnesses must be called from far-distant sections of our empire, and whose inquiries must embrace the feelings, views and predilections of people as opposite in sentiment as they are distant in geographical position? If the London investigation took three months, how long ought ours, *pro rata?* Further argument upon this point would be an insult to your understandings. It is obvious there is not time to carry out this scheme properly, were it possible to do so with such a committee, and make a report for action at this session of Congress. Dog days would be upon us before these gentlemen's gathered light would throw its rays upon this benighted body, and it would be really August when their *august* dignities were prepared to render an account of their stewardship.

Mr. Speaker, my friend from Tennessee (Mr. Brown) who addressed us yesterday, informed the House that the committee (of which he is a worthy member, and to his credit let me add, is opposed to this imprudent request,) have been already receiving volunteer information. They have been anticipating our action by opening the doors of their committee-room to the swarms of hungry applicants for favor who invest this city. I know not by what authority this is done. But with authority or not, it cannot influence my opinions. If it is volunteer testimony they require, I doubt not it will be supplied. Every mail from the East is loaded with circulars and letters from parties having dollars and cents at stake. Where direct advantage follows the enactment of laws, there is no lack of *disinterested patriotism* to volunteer assistance. The doctrine of free trade is called an abstraction; if so, he gives no prospects of practical personal gain, and, therefore, has few energetic, spirited advocates, who will travel hundreds of miles to the Capitol, to enforce upon law-makers its truths. The volunteer assistance procured by the committee will come from the *disinterested patriotism* of those who desire the prohibition, by high duties, of the commodity which they themselves manufacture.

One other objection. This investigation, if instituted, should be by joint commission of both Houses. We are joint in action!—dependent upon each other in the final passages of laws. The information is as necessary for the Senate as ourselves. It is not my purpose to detain the House longer with arguments against this resolution. I have already said more than was my intention at rising, but less than I believe the subject demands. I have attempted to show (with what success the

House will decide) that an impartial and an instructive report, really useful as a guide to our legislation, cannot follow the deliberations and searchings of this committee—that it is one-sided, and has prejudged the case upon which it desires to act the umpire—that there is not time, were it without these objections.

Mr. Speaker, if I were to follow the example of some learned gentlemen, members of this House, I would now proceed and discuss the merits of the tariff question. But believing such deviation from "order" is "better in the breach than the observance," I shall withhold. At the proper time, when the great question is legitimately before us, I hope to be allowed to give my views. Then I shall attempt its discussion in every one of its multiplicity of phases. In advance, I beg leave to give notice that when a bill is reported, I shall, to the extent of my ability, impress upon the House the following points:—

1st. Special laws, granting exclusive privileges, or encouragment to particular classes or professions, are unequal, and consequently unjust, and in violation of the genius of our institutions, and of the Constitution. A protective tariff is of this class.

2d. Protective duties are high duties laid upon foreign products, whether manufactured or raw, to prevent their importation at prices less than the same products of our own country, and must, to be effectual, be mostly prohibitory. Now, as the impost system of taxation was originally adopted to raise revenue to defray national expenditures, and as a high tariff is an abolition of revenue, some other mode of taxation must be devised. What shall that mode be?

3d. But if a tariff for protection was consistent with a tariff for revenue, and both would follow the same regulation of imposts, yet would it be suicidal to commerce. For if it is true that decreased importations, by the operation of an increased duty, will pay the same revenue, yet commerce suffers; additionally from the fact, that the excluded nations would seek out other buyers, and of course other markets for purchase.

4th. A high duty is a tax upon the consumer to the amount of duty paid upon the foreign article,, and whilst it increases the price of the home-made article to that of the foreign, yet in the former instance (the home-made) the increased price goes into the pockets of manufacturers, and not into the Treasury; therefore, if the object of protection was fully attained, of excluding the competition of foreign commodity, and supplying its place solely with home-made, the seventeen millions of consumers would be extra taxed, over and above the necessary expenses of Government, for the benefit of the less than eight hundred thousand engaged in manufactures and trades.

5th Protection is injurious to manufactures. It restricts its market to home consumption, for other nations will retaliate the policy of exclusion, and if they do not, the enhanced price of our manufactures would prevent their competing

with other countries; and would raise a vigorous, speculating competition at home, which would destroy the present progressive prosperity by inducing to enter the business, men without principle or fortune.

6th. Commerce is the greatest protection to manufactures, and high duties are destructive of commerce. For high duties discourage importations, induce other nations to turn to manufacturing, which before were content to purchase by exchange of raw materials; encourage smuggling and other evasions of the revenue laws; cause similar restrictions upon our productions of the soil, and onerous port charges and vexatious maritime regulations.

7th. The protective policy is hostile to the prosperity and good condition of the laboring manufacturer. It is an extended commerce, which co-equally extends the field of labor, a free, untrammelled interchange of commodity with the whole universe, and the entire absence of all legislative interference or bounties, that labor will find its best reward, and industry its best protection.

8th. The spirit of the age is tending toward free trade. The nations of Europe have recently become anxious inquirers into its political and social advantages. The general assimlation of customs regulation, the mutual dependence of an unfettered intercourse, the beautiful and harmonious working of a system beyond the control of ambition or avarice, would in time bind mankind in bonds of "amity, good will, and peace," driving war and famine forever from the world.

NOTE —After Mr. Wood had concluded, Mr. Williams of North Carolina (Whig) moved the resolution do lie upon the table; which motion, on the next morning, was put and carried, by 108 to 79.

SPEECH OF MAYOR WOOD IN CONGRESS,

ON THE

NAVY APPROPRIATION BILL.

DELIVERED MAY 20, 1842.

The House being in Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union, and having under consideration the bill making appropriations for the naval service for the year 1842—

Mr. WOOD rose and addressed it, in substance, as follows:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The committee will remember that, on yesterday, the House resolved, on motion of the honorable chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, to take this bill out of committee, and close debate thereon, on Monday next at 1 o'clock. The committee will also remember that, though it has been before us longer than a week, and though it contains twenty-nine sections, and proposes an appropriation of nearly eight millions of dollars, we have not as yet closed the debate upon the first section. In pursuance of the resolution adopted by the House, but two days remain to discuss the twenty-eight sections not approached. I submit it to gentlemen, whether it is possible to do justice to the examination which these numerous details, not yet reached, require, within so short a period. For myself, I cannot vote understandingly upon them, with the little information now before me. Without reasons more cogent than any thus far offered, my vote shall be found recorded in the negative. I have listened attentively to the chairman of the Committee on Naval Affairs, (Mr. Wise,) and to the gentleman from Massachusetts, (Mr. Cushing,) who appears as first lord of the admiralty; and I respectfully deny that either, with all his ability and ingenuity, has adduced arguments sufficiently exculpatory of the largeness and extravagance of this appropriation.

Declamation and oratorical flourishes about the glories of the American navy cannot induce me to give support to a profligate expenditure of the public money. I desire reliable facts, figures, and official statements—something tangible, addressed to reason, and not the fancy. Since the establishment of this Government, there never existed a greater necessity for close investigation and care in voting away revenue, than the present;

yet we see honorable members ready to vote, without discussion or examination, every dollar asked of them. The haste with which it is sought to close this debate, and in a moment part with an amount which, under preceding administrations, constituted one-third of the whole annual expenditure, is evidence in behalf of this remark.

Have gentlemen reflected upon the responsibility they assume in yielding assent to a demand so unwarranted? Have they looked into the enormous executive requisitions upon our table, and made comparisons with those from the same source under the late much-vilified regime? I opine not. What do facts tell us? The Secretary of the Navy has, in his annual report, estimated that the necessary outlays of his department for the year 1842 will be—

For the naval service - - - - - - - - - -	$8,213,287 23
" marine service - - - - - - - - - -	502,292 60
	8,715.579 83
To this add the unexpended balance remaining to the credit of the department - - - - - -	2,965,594 96
	11,681.174 79
Congress have already voted for an iron steamer -	500,000 00
Various bills reported from the Committee on Naval Affairs, estimated - - - - - - - -	500,000 00
	12,681,174 79
To which may be added the home squadron appropriation of last session - - - - - - - -	789,000 00
	$13,470,174 79

Now, how does this amount bear comparison with the sums estimated for, and appropriated by, the Democratic party when in power? I will take the four years of Mr. Van Buren's administration. The official reports made to Congress show the following sums as estimates and appropriations:

	Estimates.	*Appropriations.*
1837, - - -	$5,513,721 00	$5,679,021 00
1838, - - -	5,185,124 91	4,135,270 00
1839, - - -	4,776,125 64	4,776,125 64
1840, - - -	4,647,820 00	5,762,120 00
Total,	20,122,791 55	20,352,536 64

Here it will be seen that the highest estimate for either of the four years was in 1837—the year in which the exploring expedition was fitted out, at an expense of about $500,000; and, notwithstanding that charge, it amounted to but $5,513,721—being $3,201,858 83 less than the esti-estimate for the present year. But, if this large difference exists in the estimates, how much larger will be the difference in the actual appropriations, if the committee and the House pass the bill now presented! The largest appropriation made for any one year of the last administration was in 1840, and amounted to but $5,762,120; whereas I have shown that, with the bills already passed, the bill before us, the estimate of the Secretary, and the unexpended balance, there will have been appropriated, this year, $13,470,174 79—an excess of $7,708,-054 79, and thirteen-twentieths of the Van Buren *four* years.

The amount demanded is equal to the whole sum expended for both army and navy in any one of the last five years. I cannot vote for it. I cannot give my support, humble and inefficient as it may be, to this rapid progress towards the accumulation of a public debt, from which it will be impossible to recover. I cannot give my support to the rearing, in this home of simple republicanism, a powerful and splendid navy, with all its paraphernalia of pomp and tyranny. I could not return to an honest and truly Democratic constituency, after having aided in a system of profligate squandering; especially when the deficit is to be drawn principally from the earnings of their industry. Hereafter, should it become my province to denounce (as it will be the duty of every good citizen) the enormous expenditures of the *patriots* now in power, I cannot give them the privilege of pointing to my vote as having aided in the act.

Sir, if the condition of our foreign relations bore a threatening aspect, and danger of collision was anticipated from any quarter, no man sooner than myself would prepare and do battle for defense. The unanimous voice of my people would be heard first in behalf of invigorating the maritime army. The only sentiment which could raise in my breast, if the position of pending negotiations were such as to leave "a hinge to hang a doubt upon," as to the speedy and amicable arrangement of all questions at issue, would be to arm, and "to arms"—"millions for defense, but not one cent for tribute."

But it is not contended that war is probable. No gentleman has advocated this bill upon that ground. The honorable Secretary has not proposed the increase predicated upon the slightest fears of difficulty with England. Nothing has been said in this debate, giving color to

the idea that an increase of the navy is necessary in anticipation of any such event. It appears to be generally conceded that this is to be exclusively a permanent peace establishment. Nor are there causes for apprehension of war. Great Britain will not attempt the subjugation of the American prowess. It has never been her policy to declare hostilities against the brave, the powerful, and the just, when diplomacy or corruption of honor by gold could reach the negotiating officer and obtain her object. So long as Daniel Webster wields the Department of State, and holds within his grasp the thoughts and the will of the pliant Executive, so long will the peace of this country be maintained, if with England is the only contention. Her policy will seek other means of preserving peace and obtaining her desires than by the cannon and the sword. Experience has taught her that here are to be found, not imbecile Chinamen—not enervated Indiamen—not tyrant-ridden Europeans—but men in the full growth of intellectual and physical manhood ; who, when in embryo and comparatively powerless, stood up in two contests, unshrinkingly and successfully against her overgrown might. She knows we were refractory in childhood, and have never repented the contumacy : on the contrary, when what she conceived to be wholesome chastisement has been attempted, we have turned upon the parental assailant with other than filial mercy. For this we have not been forgiven ; nor do we ask forgiveness. It is true, we are a sprout from her trunk ; but we have grown a rival tree : we claim with her a common origin ; but, thank God, we are not linked to a common fate : we will perpetuate her language, and all that is ennobling in her virtues and glorious in her institutions ; but trample under our feet her threats, defy her prowess, repudiate her vices, and, if bloody strife ensues, sink into oblivion the last foothold of her trans-Atlantic power.

Mr. Chairman, now is the time to enlarge the navy? The wheels of Government but yesterday stood still, and the machinery of the Executive was stopped, for the want of a small pittance wherewithal to proceed. A permanent debt, heretofore unknown to the present generation, has been, within a twelvemonth, fastened upon us by the party in office. But yesterday, the public faith was hawked up and down Wall and Chestnut streets, an humble suppliant to *British Capitalists* for favor. Pecuniary dishonor—the first since the establishment of an American mint—has been permitted to visit and rest upon our escutcheon. Out of money, out of credit, embarrassed and financially disgraced—is this the chosen opportunity to appropriate the millions asked? The vicious

banking system having spread its evils through the land, our industry is borne down by oppressions which paralyze every sinew of production. The great bubble of extended credit-system, created and upheld as it was by the credit party, has exploded over our heads with terrible devastation; making a wreck of fortune, character, and life, and sinking the iron deep into the bosom of the wife and mother. With the yeomanry and trading population, "chaos is come again"—man looks upon his fellow as a foe. Self-preservation and interest are now the predominant springs of action. The biting want of maintenance has driven the mind to expedients for a sustenance, as it has taught a lesson in economy which *force*, that unyielding tutor, has driven him to practise. Men have realized want. It is no longer an unpleasant day-dream reverie, arising upon the vision in crossing the path of the tattered mendicant; but has become a painful reality, from which there is no escape by passing on. Retrenchment and reform is now the domestic economy of the American people; and be assured, sir, the time is not far off when it will be the irpolitical economy. The time is not far off—for it is now! The people of this country *now* demand, through their Representatives, a reduction of the public expenses. They call upon that party, and those men, some of whom have the full control of the executive branch, and others of the legislative branch, to carry out in practice a general system of contraction. They ask it at your hands. They say, "We will not revert to the oft-repeated promises and solemn pledges with which you made the air of 1840 vocal; nor will we tell you of the professions for our own prosperity, which, without stint and without bounds, were lavished upon our credulous ears. Let them pass. It is true, the odious *sub-treasury times* were the heydays of thrift, compared with the present gloom which our "generous confidence" has given us. But of this, no matter. Our own folly has produced much of our own distress; but to the Government we look, not to put money in our pockets—not to enact laws by which idleness may get rich and labor be defrauded—not to lend its aid in the re-establishment of a cormorant monopoly, which, like the locusts of Eygpt, will overshadow the land with its pestilential progeny: we look to it to contract its power, to reduce its expenses, and to cleanse its abuses. These are of the thousand reforms so loudly promised us; and having given you the power—the full and absolute control of the law-making power—we call upon you for action, speedy and efficient action. It is no answer to say you have fallen out among yourselves; that, in the struggle for the mastery of the

spoils, the Executive has been separated from the Legislature; that, without harmonious action for both, nothing can be accomplished; and that your President is a traitor, or that your ex-legislative leader is a dictator. Of your criminations and recriminations we know nothing. By your joint and combined advice and proffers, we drove the late incumbents from power, placing you joint and combined in their stead; and, in your joint, combined, as well as individual character, we hold you responsible." This, sir, already is the language of the people. How is it met? In what have their expectations been realized, and your pledges redeemed? Where has been furnished the evidence of the so violently denounced Florida war corruptions? Where are the proofs of the Executive malpractices? Where the slightest testimony of a single profligate expenditure? And who are the thieves and peculators in high places, which, so soon after getting the reins, you intended to identify? Give us the record; produce the data. It cannot be done. These vile charges, like the viler inventors, have sunk into silent insignificance. The brains which conceived them, and the tongue which gave them utterance—though still following their wonted avocation of abuse by calumniating each other—have not the hardihood to reiterate, or the slightest proof to adduce in substantiation of a single slander. That part of Whig promises cannot be performed. Not so as to the retrenchment of expenses. There is no impediment to a full compliance in this particular. Coming into office with at least forty majority in this House, and nine in the other—with the President and heads of the departments—no obstacle presented itself. Why has it not been done? Why has it not been proposed? You have the power, and there exists the necessity. The expenditures are too great; they are far beyond the simplicity compatible with the Republic, and very far beyond what is compatible with the present means of defraying.

Retrenchment is the order of the day in private life; why should it not be the practice of those who are honored with stations in public life? You have held power over a twelvemonth, during which Congress has been in session nine months; and no retrenchments worthy the name proposed or adopted. It is true the honorable gentleman from Virginia, [Mr. Gilmer,] to whom much praise is due, early in last session moved a committee for some such purpose; but no measures have yet been offered, save what relates to our own franking privilege and mileage, which, although commendable reforms, are minor, indeed, compared with the overshadowing cost of this Government. I desire good faith upon

this part of Whig promises. Why are not efforts made for a compliance? The treasury is empty—the credit of the country prostrate; and yet nothing is said of a reduction of outlays. The last Democratic Congress voted you five millions to commence with; at the extra session you voted an additional twelve millions, as a permanent loan; and at this session another five millions—making, in all, twenty-two millions in less than a year; and yet pennyless and bankrupt, and a daily crying give! give! give! Why, instead of the lamentations of the chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means over the lack of funds to replenish our exhausted treasury, have we not substantial bills of retrenchment and reform, which will lop off the causes of our distress? The people do so. It is not their practice, when involved in embarrassments, with burdens greater than their income, to borrow, borrow, borrow. They retrench—that is the first principle of their domestic economy; and I mistake them if they will not exact similar economy of their public servants. What would be thought of that man, in private life, who, a creditless debtor, kept up a splendid establishment, without apparently knowing he could not afford it? But who would pronounce him honest, if sane, if such a one made voluntary bequests of one-tenth of his whole income? You have done this: while an avowed bankrupt—with expenditures greater than receipts—you gave away the proceeds of the public lands, averaging three millions annually. This is only the suicidal policy of knaves. Surely "he whom the gods wish to destroy, they first make mad." Sir, the expenses of this Government are as far beyond what, under a proper system, would be necessary, as they are beyond our ability to support. This fact was fully established by the twenty-sixth Congress. That Congress, though repudiated by the people, who thought best to substitute a *hard cider* Congress, was satisfied of this fact. Its acts prove this remark. It made great progress in the work of reform, commencing in the right way and in the right quarter. It reduced the emoluments of the collectors of our large seaport cities to an amount within the bounds of reason; but yet leaving them far beyond, in my opinion, a sufficient recompense. The collector of New York, who, under the old law, considered himself poorly paid if his salary and perquisites netted less than twenty thousand dollars, was limited to six. The postmaster at New York, whose yearly income had grown from five to over twenty thousand, was reduced and limited to five thousand dollars. The district attorney and marshal also came within the pruning-hook. Here was serious retrenchment. Hundreds of thousands of dollars an-

nually were thus brought into the coffers of the nation, which had previously been the pay of public officers.

Thus has the example been given you by the Democratic Congress which you have so much animadverted upon. Why not follow in its footsteps? Why not go and continue this work? None can question the policy—nay, justice to the tax-payers. It must be done, sooner or later, or national degradation will surround us. A Democratic Congress commenced it in good faith, which its successors promised should be continued and perfected. And it was but commenced!

Sir, I have taken some trouble to look into the yearly cost of carrying on this Government for the last twenty years; and am convinced that, estimating it at present at twenty-five millions, there is room for striking off at least one-fifth, leaving it at twenty millions. Indeed, Senators, whose long experience in public life and whose ability to judge of these matters qualify them thereto, have asserted that sixteen or seventeen millions would be sufficient. I would take the estimate of twenty millions, which my examination assures me will leave every department in full vigor.

To do so, I would propose reductions in the following branches of the public service, which a close examination of the whole subject has convinced me can be done without detriment:

From the mileage of members of Congress:

Length of the sessions, one quarter.

Contingent expenses of Congress.

Expenses of the Judiciary department.

Salaries of the President and heads of the departments.

Expense of intercourse with foreign nations.

Home expense of State department.

Expense of Treasury department.

Expense of collecting revenue, and light-house department.

Expense of General Land Office,

Expense of coining department.

Expense of the War and connecting offices.

Expense of the Department of War, including a reduction of the military establishment, &c.

Expense of the Navy, including a general supervision of yards, purchases, abolition of Navy Board, &c.

Expense of Post Office department, including restriction of the franking privilege.

I would thus relieve the Treasury of millions, and not cripple a sinew of defense, or impair the full efficiency of a single office. Nor is this all. I would bring in several hundreds of thousands of dollars annually, which would find their way into the pockets of the office-holders. I would bring into the Treasury all fees and emoluments received by the following officers, over and above a fair recompense for their services:

Consuls abroad.
Deputy postmasters.
Marshals and attorneys.
Revenue-collectors.
Pursers.
Navy-agents.
Commissary General Purchases.
Military store-keepers.

Now, Mr. Chirman, holding these views, can my vote be expected for this bill? I have shown by figures, which do not lie, that it is extravagant, unnecessary, and far beyond any appropriation for corresponding purposes made for the late Administration, when there was as much necessity. I have shown that not only is the sum proposed exorbitantly large, but that the Treasury is bankrupt, the tax-payers poverty-stricken, and the spirit of the people in favor of "retrenchment and reform." I have shown the already enormous useless expenditures, by pointing directly to them.

But, sir, let us look a little further. Suppose the objections thus far urged were without existence. Let us imagine that the Treasury is full, and without indebtedness; that the people are prosperous, and willing to bear additional burdens; that extension, expansion, and prodigality characterized the age, and there were no existing evils of this character;—would it be consonant with propriety and correct legislation to pass this bill? I think not. It is not intended by the fathers of the Republic that upon their plain and unostentatious foundation should be built a gorgeous and powerful nation. They did not establish this political community for conquest or plunder. It was no part of their design that posterity should rear, upon the corner-stone laid by their hands, a splendid edifice of naval or military glory. Their policy was essentially peaceful. Meek and humble in spirit, they banded themselves for protection, and for protection alone. The Union was a confederacy for mutual defense and preservation, and not to form a league, the consoli-

dated strength of which could reduce nations, impart glory, or make too strong the arm of the Executive. Simple and republican themselves, they sought to establish a Government thoroughly imbued with their own faith—one assuming no power not necessary, exerting no authority not required, antagonist to no principle of popular rights. Would a naval armament numbering its hundreds of ships and millions of tonnage, employing its thousand commanders, disbursing its millions on millions annually, and extending to an almost unlimited degree the already overgrown privileges of the President, who, by virtue of the Constitution, is "commander-in-chief of the army and navy of the United States," be consistent with simple republicanism? It would not. But pass this bill as now before us, and the first step is taken; the first stride towards consolidation, Executive mastery, and an incubus of debt, is taken—irrevocably taken.

Another objection: Ships, after construction, must be supported; officers, men, supplies, and stores, must be furnished. The end is not with the cost of building. The keel is but laid for a continuous and never-ending expenditure. They must be kept afloat. If unemployed, they rot at the depots, and the whole is lost. The error once committed of saddling the country, in a time of peace and embarrassment, with a large floating naval world, you must go on appropriating annually a proportionably large amount to keep it sea-worthy and from falling to decay. It is a permanent expenditure now presented to us. The aggregate of this bill, enormous as it is, will be less onerous than what will be necessary to preserve it from ruin. And, when once made, there can be no receding. As with State appropriations for internal improvement, you must go on *ad infinitum*, or all will be lost.

Again: I find no provision in it, or in the several bills for the reorganization of the Navy Department reported by the committee on Naval Affairs, to remedy the evils of the present manner of procuring supplies. The door for corruption, which long practice, from the foundation of the navy to the present moment has opened, has not been closed. I would remedy this objection, before voting so large an amount. Under long-established usage, the navy agents are authorized to make open purchases, without contract, without agreement or supervision. A large portion of the material, and many heavy articles of stores used at the yards, as well as nearly the whole outfits of ships preparatory to sailing, are procured in this manner. These officers have permission to disburse hundreds of thousands annually, without check as to prices or quality.

They buy of whom they please, and at such prices as they please. I am not prepared to say that, of my own knowledge, there are malpractices; but I do say, that if none have been, it was not for want of opportunity: we may thank the integrity of the officer, and not the strictness of the laws.

Before placing at the disposal of the Secretary the millions comprehended in this bill, I would supervise the laws regulating purchases. I would not, in these days of want and peculation, place in the power of any agent the opportunity of profiting ten and twenty per cent. by his disbursements. Every article should be supplied by contract. It should be the duty of the Secretary, or of the Board of Navy Commissioners, or the agent, to advertise for estimates in the public prints; thus giving to every citizen an equal opportunity to benefit by this immense patronage; and incurring no loss to the Government from bad quality, high prices, and collusion between the officer and the factor, or merchant. But, Mr. Chairman, there is another consideration which, though not relating directly to either of the points thus far urged, is a subject for serious reflection, and is equally applicable to every money-bill presented to the House. Is this the proper stage of the session to discuss and act upon bills to appropriate money? Is it wise policy to make these large bequests at this time, within a few weeks of the expiration of the sliding scale of the compromise act, without any adequate provision to insure revenue; and, in fact, without a law to carry into effect the only existing law which can give us a dollar? The leaders of the Whig party in this House (the very men who are urging on these cormorant bestowments from an empty treasury) tell us that a high tariff is necessary for revenue; and that, without a new law to take the place of the compromise law, and without a general supervision of the whole subject, there will not be revenue enough to meet one-half the public expenditures.

We are told that, to keep the wheels of Government in motion, it will be necessary to lay additional duties upon imports, and to settle upon a permanent basis this greatest of all questions. I ask whether, under the avowed condition of our collecting laws, it is wisdom to pass this, or any bill for similar purposes, before some action is taken on the revenue bill? Can it be the correct policy of Congress to go on appropriating, appropriating, appropriating, with empty coffers, an admitted want of laws to bring in and secure the usual fiscal income, and with a probability of a heavy falling off of imports, under any rate of duties? Cer-

tainly not. Were there no other objections this alone ought to prevent action at this stage of the session, or until the other and more important business is disposed of. And is it not strange we find here men advocating measures so contradictory; telling us, in one moment, that we must pass a high tariff, to preserve the nation from bankruptcy; and in the next, proposing the most extravagant outlays? Is it not singular consistency, to use the mildest phrase? If it is true, as alleged by the high-tariff party, that it will be impossible to carry on the Government, under the lowest reduction of expenditure, without a material advance on the present rate of duties, why is it that, before action is had on the tariff question, so much anxiety is evinced to enlarge our appropriations? Why are the gentlemen in such hot haste to make these heavy requisitions upon the public coffers?

Sir, I think the astute eye of prophesy is not necessary to divine the reason. I do not believe that any but a Talleyrand or a Metternich can unravel this seeming secret. In my humble conception of the ruling motives of men, the "why and the wherefore" is to be found in the same reason which made them bequeath to the States the public domain, without consideration and without cause. It was, to drive us by necessity to a high tariff, to fill up the vacuum thus made in our finances; to force us, by appeals to national honor to preserve the national credit, to go with them in their unhallowed designs upon the rights and liberties of the people; to give away our anticipated receipts, that means may be taken, through the operation of an increased tariff, to favor particular interests at the cost of the tax-payer. It is for this we have systematic expansion, instead of the systematic contraction the times demand. Besides the tendency of Whig principles to inflation, as evidenced in every instance where they have obtained the power—besides their love for debt and detestation of liquidation—besides their contempt for everything *locofocoish*, as is the pay-up system, there are now at work other motives and other inducements. The expenses must be increased, because there must be a deficit between revenue and disbursements. Having embarrassed and exhausted the finances, it is supposed the people will rise *en masse* in favor of devising a remedy, which they are prepared with in a high tariff, and thus accomplish, by a trick, that which they dare not ask for as a principle.

I mistake very much if this is not the object hidden under the bill before us. In fact, the veil of public necessity, with which it is sought to hide the scheme, is too flimsy to deceive the most unsuspecting. No

party could drive so recklessly on, after the many protestations of reform, without some such intention.

Mr. Chairman, we are told that an increase of the navy is advantageous to commerce, and that every member representing a commercial district is expected to support this bill. It has been said, by gentlemen who have advocated it, that the principal employment of our naval marine is to protect the commercial marine. The interests of the Representatives from the Atlantic cities have been appealed to, to come forward in behalf of what they are told is the vitality of commerce. Sir, I am not old, but yet too old to be caught by pretexts so weak. Could arguments like these (which, at best, are addressed to our interest, the most selfish of all legislative influences) affect my vote, I should be incapable of performing the trust confided in me. I am yet to learn that in any quarter of the globe the American shipping has suffered for the want of Government protection. No cases have come to my knowledge where our flag has been insulted, or our property destroyed or taken from us, because of a restricted navy. There have been isolated instances of encroachments, but none that could have been obviated had every ship of war been a fleet. England and France, with the most extended navies in the world, have occasionally met obstacles to their trade. But the stars and stripes are a passport upon every sea to the hull and spar which bear them. Our bright bunting floats unmolested over the wide expanse of the ocean, for there are none so daring as to do it injury. Under its broad folds, legitimate trade is secure and respected.

And were we liable to frequent losses for the want of the proposed increase, I am far from being satisfied that, of the two evils—the passage of this bill, and the chances of occasional injury without it—the latter is not the least. Can it be advantageous to the city of New York to adopt a policy which drives us into a restrictive tariff? If, by large drafts upon the Treasury, the necessity of additional duties is forced upon us, commerce will undergo a diminution, because your increased duties will decrease importations. The foreign trade cannot thrive if legislative impediments are thrown in the way of its free action. It is not reasonable that, where an exorbitant toll is demanded for ingress, that ingress will not diminish. It is a well-established axiom, that the imposition of higher duties upon imports immediately and seriously affects the commercial trade; hence the rallying-cry of a party not many years since in this country, of "free trade and sailors' rights." Therefore, admitting that an accession of a ship-of-war is required to protect our flag,

it would be suicidal to protect it at a cost so great: better arm our merchantmen at private expense, for self-protection, than lay them up in ordinary, without employment. Gentlemen had better use other arguments militating less against them. It is not wisdom in Congress to attempt to give protection to any branch of trade, when such protection is only to be obtained by the inflicting of harm. In this instance the injury would be twofold: first, to the interests intended to be the recipients of favor, second, to all other interests which are taxed for its support.

There are other arguments which press themselves upon my notice; but I fear the patience of the committee is already exhausted. I could go on elaborating the objections which are continually arising before me, but the allotted time for cutting off the debate, and the many other gentlemen who are anxious to be heard, warn me not to tresspass much farther. It is a grave topic, and admits of a wide range of discussion. At any time, in any condition of the Treasury, a bill to appropriate money involves important considerations. To vote money, is to expend the proceeds of taxation; which is to part with that portion of the capital or results of industry which is bestowed upon the Government for its necessary disbursements. If the people are interested in the amount of taxation levied upon them, to a corresponding extent are they interested in its disposition.

If the amount expended is drawn from the tax-payer, we are but his agents to appropriate his money for the maintenance of law and order. It is equally criminal to make lavish or impolitic use of it. I conceive that we would be as guilty of dereliction of good faith by complying with exorbitant behests from the executive departments, as if we put our own hands into the Treasury to fill our own pockets. By the Constitution, we are more the guardians of popular contributions than of the popular liberties. We are made the peculiar conservators of the money-power. It behooves us, therefore, to scan closely all requisitions. Endowed as are the members of this House with the high privilege of representing the great body of American freemen, it behooves us, in the plenitude of power, not to forget the poor tax-payer at home.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I beg leave to say that it is with regret that an imperative sense of duty has compelled me to address the committee on this subject. It is with no little fear my position has been assumed. The almost overshadowing popularity of the navy, and its adaptation for American defence, connected with the recollection of the

glorious victories which crowned its success in the last war, made me feel I have been treading on dangerous ground. Had my inclinations alone been consulted, my voice would not have been heard; but convictions, matured from deliberate reflection, have prompted my tongue, and it has spoken. I regret to be thus seemingly placed in opposition to it; but, at the same time, beg to be understood that it is to the unprecedented increase at this time I object—not to the service. I object to this extravagant proposition, believing it to be impolitic, unnecessary, anti-republican, and premature. I am willing to vote the usual annual sum, and will go to the highest of either of Mr. Van Bruen's years; but cannot give support to the bill as now before us, without material reduction.

REPORT OF MAYOR WOOD IN CONGRESS,

ON

NAVAL AFFAIRS.

JANUARY 10, 1843.

The Committee on Naval Affairs, to which was referred a report of the Secretary of the Navy, with accompanying documents, relating to dry and floating docks and the Brooklyn navy yard, called for by a resolution of the House of the 19th December, beg leave to report:

That they have given the subject the consideration which its importance demands. Dry docks attracted the attention of the Government at an early period. The Navy Department was established in April, 1798, and the following December the Secretary officially expressed his strong conviction of their necessity. February 25th, 1799, a law passed both Houses of Congress, and received the sanction of the President, authorizing the construction of two docks, and appropriating $50,000 for that purpose. December 15th, 1802, the President, (Jefferson,) in his message at the opening of Congress, strenuously urged the construction of docks, and in March, 1813, $100,000 was appropriated for a dock yard for repairing ships of war. These appropriations were not expended, owing, as is supposed, to the inadequacy of the sums voted.

In 1814, the Secretary, in a communication to the chairman of the Naval Committee of the Senate, again urges the building of dry docks. In 1824, the Navy Commissioners made similar recommendations. In 1825, the Secretary, in a report to the Senate, enters fully into the advantages of dry docks, showing conclusively, that no navy yard should be without one, or its substitute : and, in 1826, in a communication to the House of Representatives, he says "that docks have become absolutely necessary for the prompt and speedy use of the vessels belonging to the navy."

Every administration, since the creation of the navy, has given its sanction, either by the approval of laws or official recommendation, to the erection of docks and other necessary facilities for repairs. As yet but two dry docks have been built : the one at Charlestown, the other at Norfolk. Either of these points is eminently entitled to it. The sites are excellent, and other advantages great. Previous to the commencement of these docks, New York was considered as the first position to be selected. The first survey made of the several points upon the Atlantic coast, which offered inducements for the establishing of navy and dock yards, placed that harbor among the most favorable. The report of the survey, made to the Deparement in 1818, states that, "next to Boston, it is the most suitable place for such an establishment, and one worthy of the attention of the Government as a naval depot."

But opinions have varied as to the advantages of different sites within the waters of the harbor. Since the location of the yard, repeated attempts have been made to effect a change. The Secretary has, more than once within the last ten years, contemplated its removal to supposed more advantageous positions. To procure a better site for a dry dock has been among the motives given for desiring another situation. In May, 1835, Loammi Baldwin, Esq., was appointed by the Secretary "to make the necessary soundings and examination, and to ascertain whether any more advantageous site, for a navy yard and dock presented itself within the harbor of New York." June 3, 1836, the House adopted a resolution calling for information, &c.; in reply to which, the report of Colonel Baldwin was presented. February 23, 1837, the subject was again brought before the House by a resoultion requiring "examinations to be made of the various positions not heretofore examined within the waters of New York and vicinity, which are adapted to the establishment and constrution of dry docks," &c. In pursuance of this resolution, Professor Renwich, of New York, was appointed to make the examina-

tion. His report, made in December, 1837, was against the Brooklyn navy yard, and in favor of Constable's point, opposite New York, on the New Jersey shore. March, 1838, the result of an unofficial survey, by Messrs. Swift and McNeill, civil engineers, in favor of Barn Island, was presented to the House. It gave great preference to that over any other site. In the same month a communication was laid before Congress from the navy Commissioners, in which the relative merits of Brooklyn, Constable's point, and Barn Island, are fully discussed. A decided preference is given to Brooklyn. The next and latest, and, it may be added, the most satisfactory examination, has been recently made at the instance of the present Secretary, who appointed Captains Conner and Shubrick, and Moncure Robinson, Esq., as a commission for that purpose. Much care and labor was bestowed by these gentlemen in the discharge of the duty. Their report confirmed what had previously been declared by Colonel Baldwin, that a more advantageous site than the present one was not to be found within the waters of New York harbor. Near ten years' agitation and investigation leave the matter precisely where it was found. The original selection was a proper one. It does appear that an attentive perusal of the reports which have so often been made would have long since precluded the supposition that a change was necessary. It is now, however, permantly settled. No further doubt need exist as to the permanency of the present position. It would be little less than folly or madness to adopt another. That the uncertain disposition of this question has operated against the erection of a dock in Brooklyn cannot be disputed.

The citizens of New York and Brooklyn have frequently manifested their wishes in favor of some provision by the Government for the repair and coppering of ships of war. They have held public meetings and memorialized Congress, believing there was cause for complaint. It has been thought by them as little less than miraculous, that a naval station of its importance should remain neglected; that a Government almost exclusively mercantile, whose defences and warfare were principally maritime, should have left its commercial emporium, for nearly a half century after the establishment of its navy, without a work so indispensable. Her tradesmen and mechanics have conceived themselves deprived of a portion of the public patronage and labor, which is due alike to all. The concentration of national employment at one or two favored points was looked upon as hostile to their interests, and not in keeping with the true interests of the country.

It was deemed a grievance. It may be said, these are not points for the consideration of the committee; that the opinion and wishes of the immediate citizens of New York and Brooklyn are entitled to no greater weight than a corresponding number at any other part of the Union; that the construction of public works is paid for out of the National Treasury, and for which the whole people appropriate, and of the propriety of which the whole people are judges. But the people of New York and Brooklyn, without doubting the soundness of these positions in their general application, conceive their case an exception. Their reply is, that when any portion of the people, conscious of great advantages, believe that, in the distribution of patronage, a discrimination is made against them, they have a right to be heard, and it is a fit subject for the deliberation of Congress; that there is cause of complaint, not only of an individual wrong, but a national evil; for a division of public employment "improves and augments our mechanics and artificers; gives bread to a portion of the laboring classes; induces the the improvement of our cities and navigable waters; contributes to a more efficient and general defence of the places; renders our citizens more patriotic and contented with their Government, and, by the additional interest which it gives them, more willing to defend it." Nor must it be forgotten that the navigating and ship owning interest of New York have a deep stake in the adequacy of the naval marine to protect the commercial marine. The harbor, filled with shattered and disabled ships of war, without means of repair, would offer but slight resistance to hostile fleets upon our coast. Innumerable cases will suggest themselves, in which serious consequences may ensue, and the loss of public and private property be beyond the expense of many dry docks.

As a naval station, New York has peculiar fitness, beside the extent of her commerce. Her harbor is spacious and well fortified; her channels sufficiently deep and unobstructed; her position central and commanding; and her advantages for the supply of materials and skilfull workmen unsurpassed, if equalled, in any other port. No local obstacle prevents; and a longer continuance of the absence of some provision for the repair of ships of war would be as hazardous and detrimental to the property of the Government as it is unjust to her commercial interest.

The largeness of a sum sufficient to build a dry dock there has attracted attention. To vote it at this time has elicited opposition. It can-

not be denied that the exhausted condition of the Treasury presents a serious impediment. But there are occasions when the outlay of money will conduce to the advantage of the Government, even in a pecuniary sense. In any state of the Treasury, it is wise to erect works necessary to preserve existing works. It will not be asserted that it is impolitic, even under our present embarrassments, to vote such an expenditure. The present would seem an instance of this kind. It has been represented that two ships of the line, the Washington and Franklin, now lying at the Brooklyn station, not moveable without heavy repairs and exepense, will require docking very soon, to save them from abandonment. The latter is a noble ship, which, by razeeing, could be made one of the finest frigates in the service. It would certainly be unwise to leave them in their present situation, fast falling to decay, without an effort to save them from a total loss. It can be done only by docking. The frigate Hudson, also lying there, has already been sacrificed. A survey was held upon her in November, 1841, and she was condemned as unworthy of repairs. The Washington and Franklin, if much longer neglected, will most assuredly be placad on the same list.

Much interest has recently been shown by the public in floating dry docks. It is contended that, in many respects, they possess advantages over the excavated docks, besides the difference in cost and comparatively very short time required in building; the latter of these considerations is essential, with reference to saving the ships in Brooklyn. Fears are entertained that they would be lost before the expiration of the six or eight years required in building an excavated dock. Many gentlemen of intelligence, whose opinions are entitled to confident reliance, give the strongest assurance of their belief in the utility, safety, and superior advantages of floating dry docks, and have recommended the speedy construction of one at Brooklyn, to raise and repair the Washington and Franklin.

It can be readily conceived that a proposition to construct a dock of this kind will be received with alarm by those who have not given them careful investigation. It will be looked upon by many as an experiment, and fraught with danger. The idea will present itself, that an attempt is to be made to raise from their element our ships of war, each weighing thousands of tons, by the frail and uncertain aid of a wooden machine, slightly and insecurely constructed. Unsteadiness, instability, and want of durability, will at once appear insuperable objections. Upon attainment of knowledge of the principles and practical operation of the

approved dock, it is confidently asserted, all such fears must vanish. As in all inventions, when first presented, prejudice is to be combated and beaten down before acquiescence in their utility or practicability can be obtained—there are men who, though ietelligent and honest, appear to be opposed to everything which did not come upon the stage before themselves, to whom innovations are as revolting as an attempt to change the Government or revolutionize the social system. As applicable to improvements in the navy, this hostility has been paramount. Inventions of the first merit, promising economy of time and money, and the addition to existing usages of warfare of great facilities, have frequently been rejected. No branch of the public service more requires the application of the production of intellect, and in none is such obstinate resistance manifest. The world is following progress in its onward march to the amelioration of the condition and advancement of mankind; the arts and sciences are being exerted for the simplification of mysteries which for centuries have slept in night, and the discoveries of philosophy are spreading their beneficent influences over every movement of man. The governmental policy of the powerful of Euroqean nations has been forced into an opposite cur rent to that in which it ran for ages; international law is no longer expounded by the cannon and the sword; the military tactics of Charles XII. and of Napoleon, each in their day so formidable and perfect, have been bettered by improvement; and even the every-day utensils of husbandry and mechanical tools for the present time would not be recognised by the original inventors. Mind, in this myriad of diversified applications, has, with superhuman effort, given birth to a new world, comparatively regenerated and disenthralled from the bigotry and prejudices of the old world. The navy alone has apparently resisted change. She has nearly stood still amidst the surrounding advancement. The vast improvements which commercial enterprise has bestowed upon the merchant marine have been avoided and decried by those who have had charge of the naval marine. It should not be. The efficiency of the nation's right arm deserves the benefits of the genius and skill of the world; not only is it entitled to all meritorious improvements of our own country, but to those of any other people.

The present head of the Department has evinced a desire to adopt an opposite course. Credit is due to him for a disposition to pursue another policy than those who doubt the merit of everything new, and adhere tenaciously to everything old. He evidently desires to keep pace with

the spirit of the age. Several experiments have already been made, to the adaptation of science to useful ends. The recent discoveries of Professor Johnson in detecting the impurities of copper, thus enabling the Government, as well as individuals, to detect impositions which, it is reasonable to suppose, have cost many millions, are beyond estimate in importance. Other experiments have been made, which will prove highly beneficial to the service.

Floating dry docks have been heretofore but imperfectly understood. The generally received opinion, that nothing but an old-fashioned excavated or walled dry dock could safely perform the duty of docking and undocking ships of the larger class, has prevented that attention to them to which they are so justly entitled. Practical gentlemen have too often taken it for granted "that they would not answer," refusing a fair dispassionate, practical test. To this spirit, so prevalent in our naval service, is chargeable the tenacity with which old ideas and old customs are rigidly followed.

It is not contended that the principle of docking ships by means of a floating vessel is entirely new. The general leading feature has been in use many years; but it is believed that there have been recently added to it such guards, checks, securities, facilities, and advantages, as to render it, in every necessary particular, capable of docking and undocking the largest vessel of war. In some respects, advantages over the excavated dock are claimed for it by those who understand the principles of each. These advantages will be enumerated and explained, and it is thought satisfactorily, to every casual observer.

Among the papers from the Secretary, referred to the committee, is the report of a commission appointed in October last, to repair to New York, to examine and witness the performance of the floating dry docks there, and investigate such plans as should be submitted. The gentlemen composing it were Capt. Beverly Kennon, United States navy, Col. Samuel Humphreys, United States chief naval constructor, and Walter R. Johnson, Esq., professor of mechanics and natural philosophy. It cannot be disputed that it would have been difficult, if possible, to have formed a court of investigation with more capacity and sounder judgment. The scientific and practical information necessary to ensure safe conclusions was here happily blended. Nothing can be hazarded in yielding to the opinions of this report. The required knowledge, and that patient investigation which is indispensable in procuring a proper understanding of a subject so intricate and intimately connected with,

and depending upon, scientific principles, were laboriously bestowed. The report is full and conclusive. Seven different plans of floating docks were presented, though only two were exhibited in practice, which received minute examination, being subjected to the nicest calculation. Their comparative advantages and disadvantages went through the ordeal of severe scrutiny; and though it was thought but one would answer for the naval service, the other was pronounced meritorious. They were the balance floating dry dock of Mr. John S. Gilbert, and the sectional floating dry dock of Mr. S. D. Dakin.

The operation of docking and undocking the largest class of merchant ships was performed in the presence of the commission—a full and detailed account of which is given in the report. The comparative advantages are fully shown. A preference is given to the balance dock, in the most decided language. Insuperable objections against the other are enumerated, one of which (viz.: that much greater depth of water than can be found at the Brooklyn yard will be required for its action) is enough to put it out of the question, as far as that station is concerned. The balance dock is free from this difficulty, owing to its construction upon an entirely different principle. In it, the ship intended to be docked is admitted, as in an excavated dock, between the sides; whereas with the former, the whole dock must rest under the ship, and consequently, drawing not only the draught of the vessel, but also of the dock. As, for instance, if a ship draws twenty-five feet water, and the dock twenty feet, it will require forty-five feet water to dock her in. The assertion that floating dry docks have advantages over the excavated dry dock is fully made out by the balance dock.

The objections to excavated docks are—

1st. Want of light and room. They are constructed extremely narrow, having but space enough for the vessel. The narrow construction arises from the necessity of lessening the pressure of water on the gates and under-side of the bottom, which being computed by the area of the bottom, will be found immense. This pressure of water is frequently the cause of accident, and always of unpleasant consequences. Commodore Stewart, in a communication made to Mr. Paynter, member of the Naval Committee in 1838, writes that, "owing to this constant pressure of water upon the gates, they are always leaking, and the water springing into the dock, and the bottom is kept overflowed and wet, which requires almost constant pumping for the purpose of draining it off." It is to obviate this difficulty, by lessening the pressure, that they are

built as narrow as the admission of the vessel will allow. Hence it is that not sufficient light is thrown upon the hull. In clouded days, artificial light must be introduced, to enable the workmen to perform their work. It follows, that the quantity as well as the quality of the work is not as it would be if done under the bright rays of the sun, or if not restricted from the usual light by high walls. A diminution in quantity and deterioration in quality must ensue. It may well be a question whether the enormous expense attending the repairing of vessels of war has not, in part, been contributed to by this want of light in dry docks. It is well ascertained that, with artificial light, the caulking of seams and coppering cannot be as well performed as with the natural light of day.

Another evil, arising from the same cause, is the difficulty in getting long pieces of timber into the dock, and preparing them for being placed upon the keel or bottom.

The balance floating dock is without these objections. There is no necessity for narrow construction or high sides. The pressure of water is upon all its parts. To give room to workmen, it is made double the width and much longer than the largest ship to be enclosed in it—thus at once securing light, room, air, and effective power.

2d. The health of the workmen. The extreme dampness of an excavated dock is detrimental and sometimes fatal to those engaged in them. The mechanics are crowded together eleven hours daily, in wet and cold, and a humid atmosphere. Diseases of a peculiar and serious character are frequently the result. Floating dry docks are without this evil. In them the labor is preformed on a dry floor, with good light, and sufficient ventilation.

3d. The labor in docking a vessel upon the excavated dock is *increased* as the size and weight of the vessel docked is *decreased*. Greater power is necessary to dock the smallest sloop of war than the largest ship of the line; which is not the case with the balance dock. With the latter, the reverse is the fact. The smaller the vessel, the less the required labor and power, and *vice versa*.

4th. There is less safety in the excavated docks. The gates, being of wood, are liable to decay, and to be forced open by the pressure against them which is increased by the necessity of constructing them high, to keep out extraordinary tides. The alternate exposure to wet and dry increases the chances of accident, by decreasing the strength of the wood of which they are made. In 1838, the gates of a dock in France gave way, thereby drowning and killing fifteen persons. Similar acci-

dents, destroying, in one instance, eighty persons, are said to have occurred in England.

The balance dock is without this objection. As has been seen, there is no extraordinary pressure upon any part, and what there may be is equal upon all its parts. The strain which, in the excavated dock, is brought to bear upon the gates, is borne by it upon the sides and ends, thus operating as a preventive to accidents, and not inviting them.

5th. The time required to build. It is estimated that from six to eight years will be required to build an excavated dock, and but as many months for a balance dock. Upon this point, the report of the commission properly remarks: "If the Government were at war, and had, in the harbor of New York, several disabled vessels which could not make their way to Norfolk or Charlestown, and the question was the most speedy method of getting docked, it would doubtless render this consideration important, independent of the loss of interest or cost between the commencement or completion of a walled (excavated) dock."

6th. It is stationary. The balance dock could be removed from one position to another, whenever convenience or safety required. The advantage of this quality is too obvious to need comment.

7th. Difference in original cost. The estimates for an excavated dock (at Brooklyn) are from $900,000 to $1,300.000.

Mr. Gilbert, the inventor and constructor of the balance dock, offers to contract with the Government to build a dock on the plan, 240 feet long, 85 feet wide, and 33 feet high, (large enough and with power enough to raise the ship-of-the-line Pennsylvania,) for $250,000; if built inside of an iron tank, as high as the load line, $260,000; and if all of iron, or such parts as would be necessary, but little variation from that sum. Of course the price would vary according to the size and material of which it was built. Take $1,100,000 (a medium sum between the estimates for an excavated dock) as about the cost, and it will be seen that there will be $850,000 difference in cost of building. The interest on the cost of the excavated dock would be $66,000 dollars per annum, when calculated at 6 per cent, and would, in four years, amount to $264,000—a greater sum than is required to construct a balance dock. Thus it is seen one of them could be built every four years for the interest of the cost of the excavated dock. It would not take many years to place a dock at every southern port where they are so much wanted, by the appropriation of merely the interest of constructing one dry dock on the old plan. Another consideration, too important to be overlooked,

is, that there would be much greater distribution and quantity of labor given to mechanics.

These are the prominent advantages of the balance dock over the excavated dock. In several material points, they are worthy of further discussion and amplification than can be given in this report.

We will now proceed to notice the common supposed objections to floating dry docks.

1. They are constructed of perishable materials, and are subject to decay and accident.

If built in a galvanized wrought-iron tank, as prepared by the commission, this objection and its consequences are at once dissipated. Its durability would be secured; nor would it require repair—having, in that particular, an advantage over the excavated dock. The gates of the latter, being of necessity built of wood, and, as has been stated, alternately exposed to wet and dry, their liability to decay is increased. Frequent examinations are required; and, when repaired, it is in some cases necessary to build a coffer dam, at a heavy expense. No accident to the hull of the balance dock can effect its stability, or its retention of upright position—the space between the outer and inner walls being divided into small cells. If it were possible to perforate it, the water would flow over the whole platform, thereby preserving a perfect level.

2. A vessel of the first class would be unsafe if for any length of time in a floating dock.

The fact that the floating dry docks of New York have sustained the largest merchant ships as long as it could be probable would ever be required in the navy, is a sufficient reply to this objection. No accident from this cause, nor, indeed, any other, has happened. It is no reply to say that the danger is increased with the size of the vessel docked. A floating dock which will lift and sustain one thousand tons will lift and sustain four thousand tons, provided it is constructed large enough to admit the vessel, and all its parts are increased in strength in proportion to its increase of size. Its width is always nearly double that of the largest ship intended to be docked; consequently, the effective power and strength is superior to that which is required to safely sustain any ship which it is spacious enough to hold. If made of iron, all doubts upon this point must certainly vanish.

In reply to a letter addressed to Professor Johnson, since the report of the commissioners, asking whether, in his opinion, the naked hull of a ship-of-the-line (having reference to those now at New York) could be

safely lifted and sustained in a floating dock, he says: "In reply to the specific question which you propound, I would say that, if built in a substantial and workmanlike manner, I see no reason to doubt that a dock on that (Gilbert's) plan could safely lift and sustain the naked hull of a ship-of-the-line." He evidently alludes to a wooden dock. If built of iron, there could be but little, if any, difference between it and the excavated dock, as to accident and strength.

3. The unsteady position and chances of straining or hogging the ship whilst in dock.

This objection, however true of floating dry docks generally, cannot lie against the balance dry dock- It is guarded against fully. There is a perfect adaptation of the line of keel blocks to the line of the keel of the vessel, which gives it an unyielding and firm support. It has a counterpoise to the weight of the ship, which is distributed over the whole platform.

The large area of water covered by the length, width, and weight of the dock keep the whole in an immovable position. The one now in the Hudson river, at New York, lying in the most exposed part of the harbor, where severe northwestern winds prevail three months in the year, has never met with hinderance or accident to either dock or vessel.

If the advantages claimed for the balance dry dock rested upon no other basis than theory, or its operation by a model, it would be temerity to recommend one for the Government. The value of a vessel of war, or, indeed, the cost of the dock, would be too great to intrust to the hazard of an experiment. However urgent may be the necessity, New York had better remain without a dock than to adopt one which, if failing, loss of property so great would ensue. It could not aid the cause of progress and improvement to adopt any plan of dock as a substitute, or even auxiliary to a dry dock, which would not entirely answer the purpose. An experiment is not made in constructing a balance dock. It is already in successful operation at New York for 1,500 tons, and at Amsterdam for 4,000 tons.

The Dutch East India Company paid 12,000 guilders for simply the model and drawings from which (so simple are its principles) it was constructed. At the latest intelligence, this dock was efficiently performing its duty, and no accident had occured. Its lifting power, being 4,000 tons, is nearly 1,000 greater than the ship-of-the-line Pennsylvania, and more than the Secretary tells us will be required, owing to the intention of the Department to dismantle before docking.

The Austrian Government has also made application to Mr. Gilbert. Baron Ghega, chief engineer of Austria, in behalf of his Government, after examining all the means in use in raising vessels in Europe and America, gave the preference to this plan, and made official report to that effect.

After mature deliberation, and a review of the many considerations to be weighed in arriving at correct conclusions, the committee recommend that the existing appropriation of one hundred thousand dollars, voted at the last session towards the building at Brooklyn of a dry dock, or floating dock, according to the discretion of the Secretary, be applied to the construction of a balance floating dry dock, and report a joint resolution to that effect.

SECOND PROCLAMATION ON THE NEW LIQUOR LAW.

After the preceding pages were stereotyped, the following important proclamation in reference to the new Liquor Law, was issued by Mayor Wood, to the citizens of New York :—

MAYOR'S OFFICE, New York,
April 27, 1855.

My late communication to the people of this city respecting the Prohibitory Liquor Law, recently passed by the Legislature, closed as follows :—

"I have availed myself of the first moment of the Legislature, when all expectations of repeal, or modification, were hopeless. To thus make public my position, without having had time to examine it, or to receive counsel as to my duties under it, and without knowing whether I am called upon, or have power, as Mayor, to take any part in its execution, I shall inform myself on these points without delay. and announce my conclusion to the public with the same candor that prompts this communication."

The opinions of my legal advisers are before the public, and their conclusions need but brief reiteration at my hands. In my capacity as Mayor, the Corporation Council is by the Charter constituted my guide; in my functions as Magistrate, the District Attorney becomes my co-operator. These gentlemen sustain the same relations to me as are held by Attorney Generals to the President, or the Governor. To act contrary

to their direction, until it is superseded by absolute judicial declaration, would be an illegal assumption, for doubtful powers are thus made certain. I have no discretion to take any other line of conduct, without doing what could be properly charged as an illegal assumption of power unauthorized by law. Therefore, while standing ever ready to execute all laws faithfully and diligently, to the extent of the means placed at my command, I am, like other Executive officers, confined within the boundaries prescribed by the legal advisers of my office; to act contrary would be to violate the law, or what I am obliged to consider the law, until decided to be otherwise by the courts.

The reply made by Mr. Hall, the District Attorney, is dated three days succeeding the publication of my views; that of Mr. Dillon is dated the following day. My inquiry to Mr. Hall was confined to what would be the law governing the sale of liquor in this city after the expiration of existing licenses (May 1st) until July 4th, when the penalties of prohibition will go into effect, and as to the laws governing Sunday selling during the same period. He replied that the old license system is superseded by the new, with its own appropriate penalties; that the old penalties were not only specific to the old system, but are inapplicable to the new system, as well because penalties cannot be extended by implication as because the new system had *its own* specific penalties; that by an oversight of the Legislature, the new penalties are superseded until that part of the act creating them becomes operative; that from May first, when existing licenses expire, until July 4th, no obstacle exists to the free sale of liquor in this city, and that it can be sold the same as any other commodity; and that for Sunday selling there is no penalty save the old civil penalty of two dollars and fifty cents for a whole day's traffic, and which is to be prosecuted and collected in a civil action by the Corporation Attorney.

The inquiries to Mr. Dillon were more general, applying to the whole scope of the Prohibitory section.

In reply, he says, that the Mayor is not empowered to hear and determine the charges, and punish offenses, arising under any part of its provisions. That the Mayor is not authorized to perform any other duty under the act, than to require policemen to perform the duties enjoined upon them, but that, in his direction to the police, he must caution them against any infraction of that section of the law which declares it shall not apply to liquors, the right to sell which in this State is given by any law or treaty of the United States, and which are exempt from seizure,

for the selling of which there is no penalty, and that policemen will not be warranted in seizing such liquors, or the vessels in which they are contained. The Council more particularly describes these liquors as being all those which are permitted to be imported by act of Congress, viz. —which pay duty; thus comprehending all that are imported. He also thinks that the Mayor has been appropriately advised by the District Attorney on other branches of the law before referred to.

And now an experiment is to be tried in this city, whether, in the absence of legal compulsory authority, there is sufficient moral force in the community to prevent unlimited indulgence in intoxicating drinks. Under these opinions of the law officers, the coercive principle recently adopted by the Legistature being in effect almost entirely nullified, shall we by general license and unbridled indulgence prove that coercion is necessary? Shall we thus admit the force of the prohibitory argument by showing our inability of self-restraint, our incompetency for social self-government? If so disqualified, we are totally unfit for the blessing of political self-government.

It is unnecessary to descant upon the evils of intemperance. Its results are too indelibly stamped upon the condition of a very large portion of this community, to require any allusion from me. Any man who walks abroad, or who visits the garrets and cellars of this metropolis, filled with indigence, wretchedness and disease, or who takes a glance into our prisons, hospitals or Alms House, will be more or less than man if he does not turn away with a painful and humiliating consciousness of the crime, misery, and degradation to which alcohol reduces all who yield to its temptation. Nor is it here alone where the sad results are exhibited. The same developments are often found among the opulent, the educated, and the refined, and can we be surprised that, as the philanthropist surveys this dreadful, but not over-colored picture, he should resort to remedies as violent as the evil sought to be removed appears extreme and destructive?

I apprehend all will agree with me in the existence of this great injury to society in our midst, and let us so restrain ourselves by moral force alone, that penal enactments may be unnecessary to enforce its prohibition. The best coercion is voluntary determination. The human will should have force enough to counteract the social evils of this kind of over-indulgence. When the mental has become subservient to the animal propensities, all distinctions from the brute are removed, and man is debased indeed.

And especially with reference to the Sabbath, let us unnite these principles, with a reverence for a day hallowed and blest by divine institutions throughout the civilized world. Do not again place that day in jeopardy! It has been my constant effort to give New York quiet, peaceful Sabbaths, consistent with the calmness and devotion which characterize a time dedicated to such sacred objects. The closing of the liquor shops, and it may be said almost total abstinence, has been obtained. A disposition has been manifested to comply with my wishes and with the law, in this matter, highly creditable to those engaged in the trade, and which in no small degree has served to allay much hostility to the traffic generally, besides raising the moral position of the trade itself.

Though I look into the future with some fear in view of my present restricted legal power over this subject, still there shall be no change in my efforts to maintain intact the present cessation of liquor selling and other employments on that day; and in this the liquor dealers themselves should continue to co-operate. It is their duty as well as their interest to comply. Even those who defend the occupation as an abstract, inherent right to deal in any article of merchandize, cannot but admit that none but the evil-minded, who are not creditable members of any profession or society, can maintain a position so antagonistic to public sentiment and morals. I look upon liquor selling upon the Sabbath day as a degrading occupation, from which any man, as he values his reputation, should fly as from a contagion.

Let me urge, therefore, upon all, to show that the citizens of New-York have within their own breasts a higher law, which governs their appetites without penal punishments, and that having tasted the sweets of the quiet Sabbath—of one day's rest and repose from the toils, strifes, and wickedness of the weekly contests incident to city life—we will not again relax into what is little better than bestial indulgence, on a day devoted, throughout the Christian world, to the worship of the "only true and ever-living God."

FERNANDO WOOD.

LETTER ADDRESSED TO HENRY J. RAYMOND,

ON THE

POLICE BILL BEFORE THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK,

EXPRESSING AN OPINION ADVERSE TO ITS PASSAGE.

MAYOR'S OFFICE, NEW-YORK, March 5, 1855.

To the Lieut. Governor of the State of New-York:

DEAR SIR: In the first message submitted by me to the Common Council of this City, I animadverted upon the continual application of interested parties to the Legislature for the passage of laws affecting our public interests.

In your position, and with your experience in either branch of the Legislature, it is impossible that this practice has not attracted your notice, and, of course, received your condemnation. Believing you will appreciate the motives which govern me, in offering views upon matters of legislation, when this City is interested, I take the liberty of expressing hostility to the bill now before the Assembly for the alteration of our police system, which is one of a series of measures now proposed, having their origin in personal interest rather than public advantage. It would be derelict in me, if, from any cause, I permitted this proposition to succeed, without raising a warning voice against it.

Having assumed the office of Mayor with a determination to discharge its duties with a single eye to the public interests, it is impossible for me to remain indifferent to a proposition which, if passed, will strike the death-blow to all my efforts, however feeble, to remove the shocking evils which have grown out of past misgovernment. Though opposed to granting special acts for the benefit of individuals or classes, I am willing to yield almost everything before giving up the only safeguard we possess for the preservation of the peace and the property and the lives of our people. Give up all, but give us the police. The police, as now organized under its present system, is efficient. As a whole, it not only seconds my efforts, but it has been the main instrument by which nearly every reform projected by me has been carried through. The closing of the liquor shops on the Sabbath has been principally produced by the vigilance of the police in obedience to my orders. To fully comprehend the results of this triumph over one of the greatest sources of vice and crime in this city, it is only necessary to refer to the number of arrests on the Sabbath in 1854 as compared with the arrests on the same day thus far in 1855.

The following tabular statement, from official records, is reliable:

ARRESTS ON SUNDAYS, 1854.

Jan.	1	206	Apr.	2	76	July	2	162	Oct.	1	95
"	8	63	"	9	112	"	9	180	"	8	127
"	15	83	"	16	71	"	16	143	"	15	123
"	22	85	"	23	124	"	23	132	"	22	120
"	29	70	"	30	133	"	30	117	"	29	118
Feb.	5	131	May	7	141	Aug.	6	164	Nov.	5	105
"	12	131	"	14	136	"	13	149	"	12	56
"	19	112	"	21	136	"	20	184	"	19	133
"	26	77	"	28	121	"	27	138	"	26	110
Mar.	5	97	June	4	160	Sept.	3	168	Dec.	3	71
"	12	140	"	11	139	"	10	112	"	10	87
"	19	100	"	18	130		17	126	"	17	103
"	26	116	"	25	141		24	146	"	24	78
									"	31	112

ARRESTS ON SUNDAYS, 1855.

Jan.	7	58	Jan.	21	46	Feb.	4	38	Feb.	18	60
"	14	65	"	28	41	"	11	35	"	25	47

By this it will appear that in the first eight Sabbaths of 1854 the arrests were 878 as against 338 for the same period in 1855. To appreciate this, under my administration, the increased vigilance and activity of the Police must be considered. If, with the lax discipline existing in January and February, 1854, there were arrested on the Sundays in those months 878 offenders, what would there have been under the new regulations and more stringent administration now existing? But if from any supposed cause other reasons can be found than the closing of the public houses, for so great a difference between the two years, refer to the eight Sundays immediately preceding the commencement of my term, and it will be seen that the arrests were 855 in November and December 1854, and only, as before stated, 338 for the two following months—January and February, 1855. Comment on these figures is unnecessary. The obvious deductions are, that the abolition of liquor-selling on Sunday, together with the present improved condition of the Police, are productive of morality and destructive of disorder, vice and crime; and these results have been mainly effected through the extreme devotion of the Police to my orders, and this devotion to my orders is the consequence of its present discipline, produced by the unrestricted power I now hold over it.

Other similiar reforms have been effected in the same manner, the consequence of the same cause; but this is sufficient to show conclusively that the police, as now organized and controlled, is rapidly improving, and will soon become second to no similar corps in the world, which is not directly under military rule. This improvement has been accomplished under the present system, which, though not perfect, is far preferable to that now before the Legislature.

That bill proposes that there shall be elected by the people four Commissioners of Police, who, with the Mayor, *ex officio*, shall constitute a Board to sit daily in a room to be provided by the Common Council, and, of course, at an hour when the Mayor cannot be present, and who shall, through a President to be selected by themselves, from their own number, have full and unrestricted control over the whole department, even to the issuing of orders, notices, &c., to the police.

The Commissioners are to be elected by the people. It will not do to assume that the members of the Legislature are ignorant of the mode of conducting our primary elections in this city, by dwelling upon the objections to this way of making Commissioners who are to be clothed with the important power of appointing, trying, punishing and removing policemen, in whose hands are placed the custody of the peace, order, property and lives of nearly three-quarters of a million of inhabitants. There are some propositions so evident, that no argument or statements are required to elucidate them: that a police system founded upon this principle, deriving its appointment from this source, will be destructive to every semblance of what constitutes police. is one of these. But admitting the elective principle without objection, the withdrawal of power from the Mayor, contemplated by the bill, connot be defended.

The scattering of authority among Fire Commissioners, is of itself bad enough, inasmuch as it destroys that unity of executive authority, without which no good government can exist in this city, with its present hybrid population; but to take from the chief magistrate, whose duty it is made to see the laws executed and who is responsible to the people, control over the police, is, if possible, yet worse.

It is true the bill contains one section that the Mayor shall be "Head of the Police Department," but this is a contemptible falsehood, unworthy of a place in any statute. To declare that any officer shall be the head of a department, when deprived by another section of everything that constitutes authority over it, is as absurd in theory as it is insulting to the common sense of the people, who it thus seeks to deceive into a belief of its possible practicability.

So far, I have made myself useful in the office of Mayor. My success in removing

many evils, and in the introduction of reforms of great benefit has exceeded my expectations.

I desire to go on unmolested and unrestricted in the use of the weapons by which crime has been punished, vice prevented, and municipal abuses abolished. When these are taken from me, my usefulness is destroyed. Without tools, no mechanic can construct, and without a police, no magistrate can perform his duty.

Pass this bill, and the liquor shops will soon be again opened on Sunday, and all the other evils which have so long affected us, and from which we are now happily being relieved, will soon be restored, and render this great and beautiful city a disgrace to the American name.

When this comes, the people must find some other occupant for the Mayoralty chair. I shall cease to hold it when deprived of the means to carry out the reforms which I have begun, and, so far, have been successful in accomplishing.

My personal allusions herein have been forced upon me, in a fair discussion of the subject, and not in any desire of self-glorification, or with any assumption or egotism.

I ask your co-operation in defeating a measure so pregnant with evil to this community, in whose welfare and prosperity you have so long taken an active and influential part.

I am, very truly, yours,

FERNANDO WOOD, Mayor.

We have in our possession many other documents, including the Mayor's veto of the Central Park—letters to U. S. Consuls in Europe—to the Police in respect to the Suppression of Intemperance on the Sabbath and other subjects—a flattering communication which he has received, requesting him to be a candidate for the Presidency of the United States, and his letter declining the honor—and other important papers, which we reluctantly omit, as they would swell the volume far beyond what we anticipated as a book intended for wide circulation.

THE END.

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